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# Forgotten Books

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A  
·VINDICATION  
OF THE  
DOCTRINE OF SCRIPTURE,  
AND OF  
THE PRIMITIVE FAITH;  
CONCERNING  
THE DEITY OF CHRIST:

IN REPLY TO DR PRIESTLEY'S HISTORY  
OF EARLY OPINIONS, &c.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

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BY JOHN JAMIESON, D.D. F.A.S.S.

MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL, FORFAR.

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VOL. I.

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Behold, this *Child* is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel;  
and for a sign which shall be spoken against:—that the thoughts of ma-  
ny hearts may be revealed. LUKE.

Omnes hæretici perversa credentes, panem de cœlo descendentem co-  
medere non possunt: sed obstupefcunt dentes eorum, non ciborum auste-  
ritate, sed vitio dentium. HIERONYM.

---

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THE  
P R E F A C E.

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THE idea of this work was first suggested by a letter which appeared, under Dr Priestley's signature, in one of the London prints, about four years ago. The design of this letter was to state that, although some years had elapsed since the publication of his *History of Early Opinions concerning Jesus Christ*, no answer had been given to it; and that, if the same silence should be observed during a certain time which he is pleased to limit, he would consider it as an acknowledgment, on the part of the whole Christian world, that it was unanswerable.

For a considerable time, I hesitated, expecting that some more able combatant would enter the lists against this literary giant, who has *defied the armies of the living God*. But a full conviction that I have truth on my side, emboldened me to engage in this work; and, notwithstanding various discouragements, to proceed in it. The fatal influence of the Socinian scheme, in throwing open the sluices to Infidelity, and in hurrying forward those whom this torrent has already swept away; the fascinating power which it invariably

riably discovers, in bereaving its votaries of all that distinguishes Christianity but the name; their unwearied assiduity in extending the delusion; with its rapid progress in this age; undoubtedly lay the strongest obligations on every one who really believes the gospel, to exert himself to the utmost, according to his place or ability, for the preservation and defence of the truth *as it is in Jesus*.

It seems to be the plan of modern Socinians, to carry the controversy as much as possible out of the boundaries of Revelation. The voluminous and inaccurate works of the Fathers afford them a more ample field for misrepresentation, for cavilling, or at least for conjecture. Therefore, as far as the nature of the work would admit, I have endeavoured to restore the controversy to its proper limits. With this view, I have not only considered the principal arguments from scripture contained in the History, but occasionally introduced others which Dr P. has published distinctly; especially as he refers to these for further illustration.

Considering the many able replies that have been formerly made to writers of the same class, to some this work may appear superfluous. But error, although still substantially the same, assumes a diversity of forms in different periods. This has been remarkably the case with respect to the Socinian heresy. Those who now appear as its friends deny the force of the reasoning of many former writers, because they have renounced the grounds on which that reasoning proceeded. In the last century, they acknowledged that the Logos was a person, and affirmed that this person was the mere man Jesus Christ. They now maintain that the same Logos is merely an attribute of God. Then they worshipped the Son. Now they refuse that he is entitled



## P R E F A C E.

to religious worship of any kind. In lieu of their former interpretations of scripture, they have devised a great many new ones ; which, although equally weak, and in many instances more ridiculous, are still calculated to ensnare the ignorant, and the unwary.

Some may imagine that it was quite unnecessary to enter into the controversy, as far as it respects the Fathers ; because the decision of the general question cannot depend upon their doctrine. I am as fully satisfied as they can be, that the word of God is the only test of divine truth, and that any human authority, as far as it opposes this, is of no weight. Although the majority of Christian writers, in the age immediately succeeding that of the Apostles, had held a doctrine directly contrary to the obvious meaning of scripture, they would not have merited our regard. For if the scriptures were written for the use of mankind in all ages, and were therefore to be interpreted according to the plain sense of language ; we, humanly speaking, must be as capable of understanding them in all things necessarily connected with salvation, as those who lived in that early age, or even as those to whom they were immediately directed.

However, when our opponents appeal to the Fathers, it is of importance to shew that they appeal in vain. For it cannot be denied that, did the current of antiquity in this respect seem to oppose the Trinitarian doctrine, with many it would be a powerful argument against it. But it being once established that this is the doctrine of scripture, according to its obvious meaning ; when it is also proved that the church from the beginning has adhered to it, although this circumstance can add nothing to the authority of the doctrine itself, it is very confirming to the mind in a subordi-

nate respect ; shews that the cause of our opponents is indefensible on every quarter ; tends to silence their vain boastings ; may have weight with those who will not attend to any other kind of argument ; and illustrates the unity of the church, in her successive generations, with respect to a doctrine which constitutes the very basis of revelation, deeply affects almost every article of her faith, and immediately characterizes the whole of her worship.

But in the present instance, the Fathers have been appealed to, not properly with respect to opinions, but with respect to facts ; not as themselves interpreting the sense of scripture, but as declaring the sense in which it was interpreted by others. From their testimony Dr Priestley has attempted to prove that all the Hebrew Christians were E-bionites, or what he calls Unitarians, and that the majority even of Gentile Christians, in the first ages, were of the same opinion. Were it possible to prove only the first of these positions, I do not say that we ought to renounce the doctrine of the Trinity, but that we ought to renounce Christianity entirely. For it would follow that, in the New Testament, the faith and practice of the primitive church are exhibited as directly the reverse of what they really were. But a proof of this kind is in fact impossible. For did the Fathers assert such things, there would be an evident necessity for rejecting their testimony as false or adulterated. For they subject it to the authority of scripture : and the scriptural narrative of facts, as far as it extends, is fully as intelligible as theirs. But although their testimony could not invalidate that of revelation, they may be sustained as competent witnesses of the state of facts in their own times ; when there is no certain evidence that they were themselves misled, or that they were disposed to mislead others.



It has been my wish, as far as possible, to avoid going over the same ground with those learned gentlemen who have animadverted on the *History of the Corruptions of Christianity*. But this could not be entirely avoided, without an absolute disregard to connexion. The substance of the arguments contained in that work, is republished in the *History of Early Opinions*. But it is so interspersed with a variety of new evidence, that the one could not well be separated from the other. Besides, as the *History of Opinions* did not make its appearance till the controversy with respect to the former work was terminated, or nearly so, Dr P. has exhibited many of his old arguments in a new form; meaning, doubtless, that this last statement should be considered as the result of all the investigation on both sides of the question. I am far from flattering myself, that any thing I can say will have more weight with *him*, than what has been advanced by preceding writers. But perhaps, it may appear to others, that some additional light has been thrown even on those points which have been already debated. As no reply has professedly been made to what the Doctor calls his *large* work, an ample field has hitherto remained unoccupied.

That able and elegant writer Mr Whitaker, in his *Origin of Arianism disclosed*, has chiefly directed his attention to the faith of the ancient Jews. This work was transcribed for the press, before I knew that he had wrote on the subject. I was apprehensive that what he had published might have superseded the necessity of any thing further with respect to the Jewish creed. But he has taken a general view of the subject; whereas I have considered it particularly, in relation to the objections made by Dr P. Thus, even where there is some coincidence in the reasoning, it assumes



a very different form. There are also several points in which we materially differ.

This work has swelled so much beyond what was originally designed, that it has been necessary to overlook various articles of importance which have received a place in the *History of Early Opinions*. I particularly regret that I could not enter on the consideration of what is advanced on the doctrine of the *Miraculous Conception*. But if this attempt meet with a favourable reception from the public, that may be the subject of a future discussion.

It would be presumption to imagine, that there are no mistakes in a work of such extent and variety. But I am conscious that I have in no instance wilfully misrepresented the meaning of our modern historian, or misinterpreted the language of any ancient writer quoted on the subject. Nor have I followed the ordinary plan of Socinians, in disregarding what may be reckoned the strongest arguments on the opposite side; but have endeavoured, on the contrary, to give every one its full force.

In the course of this work, those whom our author acknowledges as brethren are often designed by that name which they have assumed. They, indeed, call themselves *Unitarians*, as pretending that they alone hold the divine unity. I need not say that, in this sense, every Trinitarian must deny their title to the name; as being fully convinced that those only who believe in three Persons hold the scriptural doctrine of one God. But as this work contains so many quotations, in which the name occurs in the sense imposed by Socinians; I could not, without confusion or frequent circumlocution, avoid the use of it in this sense. Therefore, it is used merely as a general distinctive appellation

lation claimed by the party, without the most distant idea of acknowledging the justness of the claim.

Always, when it has been attainable, I have consulted the original writers referred to, unwilling to take the quotations of others upon trust.

It is not one of the least disadvantages to which this work is subjected, that it makes its appearance at a time when the public attention seems to be confined to the management of the kingdoms of this world. But there are still many, it is to be hoped, who have their eye principally directed to that kingdom *which cannot be moved*. Others may look on, as nowise interested in the issue of this controversy; or may consider it as of no moment, compared with that which engrosses their attention. But *they* will contemplate all the *shakings of nations*, in their certain subserviency to the more eminent coming of the *Desire of all nations*. As the defence of *his* essential rights has been my great design in this work, I am not ashamed to avow that I humbly commend it to his all-powerful protection.

C O N-

## ERRATA, VOL. I.

*N. B. b signifies from the bottom of the page.*

Page 23, line 15, *for* not out, *read* formed out

— 96, line 1, *for* in, *read* it

— 105, line 2, (b) *for* Now *read* How

— 139, line 7, *read* natural

— 149, line 4, (b) *read* communicative

— 176, line 8, *for* formerly, *r.* which will be afterwards explained

— 209, note, *for* 185 *read* 199, 200

— 215, note, *for* *Ἡποσχυνεν* *read* *Προσχυνεν*

— 230, line 3, (b) *for* At *read* As

— 235, line 1, *for* as such *read* as able to

— 251, line 9, *for* out *read* our

— 278, line 10, *for* אָהָא *read* אָהָה

— 288, line 2, *for* writers, *read* writer

— 360, line 22, *where the letters are dropt out,* *read* evidence

— 532, line 10, *for* mention *read* mentioned

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A  
VINDICATION  
OF THE  
DOCTRINE OF SCRIPTURE, &c.

BOOK I.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE ANCIENT JEWS CONCERNING  
THE MESSIAH.

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CHAPTER I.

*Of Dr Priestley's Hypothesis on this Subject; and of Philo's  
Doctrine concerning the Logos.*

IT is of considerable importance, with respect to the decision of this controversy, to know what was the faith of the Church before the coming of the Saviour. Dr Priestley, in the first form which he gave his work, introduced the prophets as his witnesses. "The Jews," he says, "were  
" taught by their prophets to expect a Messiah, who was to  
" be descended from the tribe of Judah;—but none of their  
" prophets gave them an idea of any other than a man like  
" themselves, in that illustrious character, and no other  
" did they ever expect, or do they expect to this day \*."

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\* Hist. of Corruptions, vol. i. p. 1.

The learned Gentleman was himself so fully satisfied of the truth of these assertions, that, important as they are in their connexion, he does not seem to have thought it necessary to add a shadow of proof. He makes bare assertion the very basis of his fabric, as if he meant fairly to shew the world what they were to expect from the whole.

However, in the enlarged form in which the same work makes its second appearance, the author descends a little from this dogmatical elevation, and deigns to favour the reader with some kind of evidence. But it is partial and inconclusive. He endeavours to prove that the Jews, without exception, at the time of our Saviour's appearance, expected no other than a human Messiah; and that they had no higher expectations in any succeeding period. But he offers no proof of his assertion with respect to the doctrine of the prophets. Indeed, if the determination of this dispute were left to the prophets alone, and if their testimony met with the same justice, in interpretation, that is ordinarily allowed to human writings, the dispute would soon be at an end. It would appear, that, if there be any meaning in language, if the prophetic writings were not designed as an imposition on the common sense of mankind, *all* the prophets, who particularly wrote of the Messiah, give the most distinct idea of a divine Person. But as Dr P. leaves his assertion with respect to them without support, it is unnecessary to consider it particularly. He wishes to take a less tedious and difficult plan, than that of exploring the depths of prophecy. If he can first establish it as fact, that the Jews expected merely a human Messiah, it will, in his account, be a sufficient presumption with respect to the truth delivered to them in Scripture.

That the generality of the Jews, at the time of our Saviour's appearance, had very confused ideas of the character of Messiah, few, perhaps, will be disposed to doubt. But it may afterwards appear that they entertained

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ed apprehensions of his character, not easily reconcileable with the idea of his being a mere man.

According to Dr P., “ Our Saviour could not possibly  
 “ have puzzled the Jewish Doctors as he did, by asking  
 “ them how David could call the Messiah his Lord, when  
 “ he was his Son, or descendant, on any other principle.  
 “ For if they had themselves been fully persuaded that  
 “ the Messiah, though descended from David, was the Ma-  
 “ ker and God of David, a satisfactory answer to his que-  
 “ stion was very obvious.” But how could that be a *satisfac-*  
*tory answer* in the mouth of a Jew, which is foolishness  
 when uttered by a Christian? For once, it would seem, the  
 distinction of natures in the person of the Messiah may be  
 admitted, as a satisfactory solution of the difficulty arising  
 from the apparent opposition of the characters ascribed to  
 him. But, kind reader, you must not presume to plead this  
 as a precedent. It is only meant to serve a present purpose.

However, as the Jewish Doctors did not give this *satisfac-*  
*tory answer*, it is fair to conclude that they were greatly  
 at a loss for one that was so. But they could not *possibly*  
 have been *puzzled*, had they not been conscious that the  
 words of David implied an acknowledgment of dignity,  
 and therefore of descent, more than human. Or, shall we  
 rather suppose that these Jewish Doctors were not so well  
 acquainted with Hebrew idioms and ideas as those of our  
 time? *A satisfactory answer* would have been *very obvious*  
 to the merest novice in Socinianism. Without any hesita-  
 tion he would have told Jesus, that it was no wise repug-  
 nant to their traditionary and established, nay, to their  
 scriptural ideas of Jehovah, to believe that a mere man  
 should sit on his right hand, as sharing in his power and  
 glory. But, surely, a good cause never had more wretch-  
 ed advocates. For *no man was able to answer him a word*.  
 Mere dastards must they all have been. For *neither durst*



*any man from that day forth ask him any more questions,*  
Matth.xxii. 46.

But if Jesus had no sonship superior to that by his descent from David, it will be difficult to vindicate his conduct on this occasion. For if Christ was only to be the son of David, the Pharisees declared the whole truth in answer to our Saviour's question, *What think ye of Christ, whose son is he?* The question was restricted to his *Sonship*. They could not, with propriety, take greater latitude in their answer. *They say unto him, The Son of David.* It is allowed that this to a Jew, was a character of the same meaning with that of Messiah. Now, as they answered discreetly, if they told the whole truth concerning the Sonship, what good end could it serve for our Saviour to *puzzle* them? Did it become the great Prophet, when men had just and distinct ideas of truth, to excite doubts in their minds, and to expose them to the danger of Scepticism? Undoubtedly, if there was any propriety in the objection made by Jesus, he wished them to believe, that the character given him by the spirit of prophecy necessarily implied a superior filiation. He might justly leave them in their perplexity, because they ought to have known his character from their own scriptures; and because he knew that they wilfully and obstinately resisted the light which these afforded.

According to our author, "Facundus very properly  
" says, that Martha and Mary would never have said to  
" Christ, *If thou hadst been here*, had they thought him  
" to be God omnipresent\*." But if Jesus be not God  
omnipresent, he could never have *properly* said to Martha,  
*I am the resurrection, and the life*, John xi. 21. 25. It  
seems abundantly evident, that even the disciples had very  
confused.

\* Ibid. p. 35.

confused notions with respect to the character of Jesus, before the effusion of the Holy Ghost, who was to teach them all things. But it is unfair to judge of the fixed principles of the disciples, from the occasional workings of unbelief; especially when their minds were in great perturbation, or under peculiar temptation. It is clear, that our Lord had reproved Martha as indulging this sin; “*Said I not unto thee that if thou wouldest believe,*” &c. ver. 40. Whence proceeded his tears and groanings in spirit, but from the grief of his holy human soul on account of the power of this iniquity, as displayed in the conduct, not of the other Jews only, but of Martha and Mary? But even while their unbelief appears in their virtually ascribing the death of Lazarus to the absence of Jesus, they in the very same words discover a conviction of his being possessed of power more than human. They declare their persuasion of his sovereign authority over death. But the sentiments of the Jews concerning the Messiah, especially as illustrated by the gospel-history, shall be more particularly considered afterwards.

Our author also argues from the interpretations given by their later writers of those passages of the Old Testament, which have been supposed by Christians to contain the doctrine of a Trinity, or of a plurality in the divine essence. When mentioning that passage, Gen. i. 26. *Let us make man*, he acknowledges that it has received a variety of interpretations\*. It has been understood as signifying that God spoke to all second causes, or to “intelligences” only, or to the elements, or to souls;” or that he used the style of a king; or that he excited or commanded himself. This variety of ridiculous interpretations shews how much the Jews are at a loss. The most general opinion, that he spoke to angels, though designed to exclude a plurality of persons,

\* Vol. iii. p. 26. 27.



persons, if it has any meaning, necessarily supposes a plurality of gods. For God cannot reasonably be supposed to speak in this style to his inferiors. Nothing can be more evident, than that the Jewish writers themselves are conscious that their interpretations of this passage, and of others of the same kind, are far from being satisfactory. They even acknowledge, that they draw a veil over their true meaning. Maimonides explains the plural language ascribed to God in scripture, as referring to his *house of judgment*, that is, to angels \*. But even after he has given this view of it, he says ; “ All things which are mentioned in the history of the creation, are not to be understood according to the letter, as the vulgar imagine. For otherwise our wise men would not have commanded the concealment of these things, nor would they have exercised such care in hiding and involving them in parables. Nor would they have even so studiously prohibited the mention of such things in the presence of the ignorant rabble. For the literal senses of these things either beget wicked thoughts, imaginations and opinions concerning the nature of God, or certainly subvert the foundations of the law, and introduce some heresy.—Whoever has any skill in these subjects, ought to be on his guard that he do not divulge them ; as we have many times given warning in our commentary on the *Mischna*. Hence, also our Rabbies plainly say, that *it is for the glory of God to conceal these things that are written from the beginning of the book to this place*. But they have said this after what is written concerning the works of the sixth day. Hence, the truth of what we have observed is evident. But because he who has acquired any perfection is bound to communicate it to others,—it will unavoidably follow, that those

“ *who*

\* More Nevochim, Par. 2. cap. 6.

“ who have apprehended any of these secrets, whether by  
 “ their own diligence, or by the help of a master, will at  
 “ times utter a few of them. But this must not be done  
 “ openly and plainly, but under cover, and only by signs  
 “ and symbols, such as are to be found scattered, and blend-  
 “ ed with other things, in the sayings of our more cele-  
 “ brated and excellent Rabbies. Therefore I also, as you  
 “ may observe, in these mysteries only mention one word  
 “ or expression, as the hinge of the whole. But I leave  
 “ the rest to others, to whom it is to be left \*.”

What reason can the learned Jews have for speaking of  
*secrets* and *mysteries*; for commanding the *concealment* of  
 these from *the common people*, the use of *parables*, of *single*  
*words*, or *phrases*, *blended* with extraneous matter; and for

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giving

\* Non omnia secundum literam intelligenda et accipienda esse, quæ  
 dicuntur in opere *Bereschith* seu creationis, sicut vulgus hominum existi-  
 mat. Nam alias non præcepissent sapientes illa occultari, neque tanta  
 cura in eis abscondendis et parabolis involvendis usi fuissent, neque etiam  
 tam studiosè prohibuissent, nè de iis sermo fieret coram imperita plebe.  
 Sensus enim illorum litterales vel gignunt pravæ cogitationes, imagina-  
 tiones et opiniones de natura Dei Opt. Max., vel certè fundamenta legis  
 evertunt, hæresimque aliquam introducunt.—Quicumque verò aliquam  
 in illis scientiam habet, cavere debet, ne illa divulget, sicuti sæpiùs mo-  
 nuimus in Commentario nostro in *Mischnam*. Hinc claris verbis dicunt  
 quoque Rabbini nostri; *A principio libri usque hûc gloria Domini est*  
*celare verbum*: dixerunt autem hoc post ea, quæ scripta sunt de operibus  
 sexti diei, ex quo patet veritas illius quod nos diximus. Quia verò is,  
 qui perfectionem aliquam nactus est, tenetur et obligatur illam aliis quo-  
 que infundere et communicare,—ideo fieri non potest, quin illi, qui ali-  
 quid ex secretis istis, sive proprio Marte et industria, sive ope præceptoris  
 alicujus, apprehenderunt, nonnunquam pauca quædam dicant. Verùm  
 non apertè et clarè hoc faciendum est, sed tectè, et non nisi per signa et  
 indicia, qualia sparsim, et aliis rebus permixta in verbis celebriorum ac  
 præstantiorum Rabbiorum nostrorum inveniuntur. Ideoque et ego, ut  
 observabis, in istis mysteriis sæpè unius alicujus verbi vel dicti solùm  
 mentionem facio, quod cardo quasi est totius rei; cætera vero illis relin-  
 quo, quibus relinquenda sunt. Ibid. Par. 2. cap. 29. p. 273, 274.



giving *frequent warnings* to this purpose; if they really believe the interpretations which they give openly? When this intelligent writer says, that the literal sense of the scriptural language concerning creation introduces *heresy*, he undoubtedly refers to the support that it gives to the Christian doctrine, which they distinguish by this name; and especially to that of the Trinity. For when the Rabbies, according to his acknowledgment, particularly apply the saying quoted from them to what is written concerning the works of the *sixth* day; they plainly intimate, that the great *mystery*, with respect to creation, lies in the language ascribed to God in the creation of man. When Maimonides speaks of a *few secrets* being unavoidably *uttered* at times, is it not implied that many more are intentionally concealed? What trust can any man of sense repose in such interpreters, as to their faithfully declaring the hereditary doctrine of their nation? In a word, is it not evident that the difference between Jews and Socinians is considerably wider than the latter pretend? For the very use of the term *mystery*, in relation to these words, *Let us make man*, must be exceedingly ungrateful to a Socinian ear.

R. Huna is introduced in a Jewish work, as saying, that if this kind of language had not been written, it would not have been lawful to say, *The Elobim hath created*, &c. \*.

On this subject Dr P. also calls in the assistance of the Christian fathers †. They may, indeed, be sustained as giving a just enough account of what they knew. Their testimony is also of weight as to the state of the Jewish creed in their own times. But they were not sufficiently acquainted

\* Dixit R. Huna in nomine Bar Cappara, nisi hujusmodi sermo scriptus esset, non fuisset licitum dicere, *Dii creavit cælum*, &c. Martini Pugio Fidei, p. 388.

† Ear. Op. vol. iii. p. 8.

acquainted with the writings of the ancient Jews, to be admitted as witnesses. It would appear, however, that in some instances when they only spoke of the Jews in our Saviour's time, or in their own, our author has understood them as expressing the faith of that people in every age. But I shall not lose time on this point, as the assertions of the fathers cannot bring conviction in opposition to other evidence. Some of them might infer from what they knew of the Jews in their own times, that their ancestors held the same sentiments. This seems, indeed, to be our author's plan of reasoning. But it is inconclusive. For with equal propriety may we infer from their later interpretations of prophecy, either that Christians have erroneously believed in a suffering Messiah, or that the Old Testament exhibits two persons under this character, the one as a sufferer, and the other as a conqueror. Justin Martyr not only shews that the ancient believers of the Jewish church considered the Word as a distinct and divine Person \* ; but speaks in such a manner to Trypho, of some of the Rabbies in his own age, that we cannot understand his words in any other sense than as expressing their persuasion, that the Messiah was to be divine. " But if we produce to them," he says, " these scriptures that I have formerly rehearsed  
 " to you, which expressly shew that the Messiah is both  
 " subject to suffering and the adorable God, they are under  
 " a necessity of acknowledging that these respect Christ;  
 " but they dare to assert, that this (Jesus) is not the Christ.  
 " But that he shall come, and suffer, and reign, and be the  
 " adorable God, they confess; which is truly ridiculous  
 " and foolish, as I shall in like manner shew †."

The

\* Dial. p. 355.

† Ὡς δὲ ἀν λεγόμεν αὐτοῖς γραφάς, αἱ διαφρηδὴν τὸν Χριστὸν καὶ παθητὸν καὶ προσκυνητὸν καὶ Θεὸν ἀποδεικνύουσιν, ὡς καὶ προανίστηται ὑμῖν, ταύ-  
 τας



The doctrine of the ancient Jews with respect to the Godhead, and the Messiah, if not referred to the testimony of the prophets, may be known from the writings of Philo, and from their Paraphrases. Some of the latter are supposed to have been written before the birth of Christ. Philo flourished, according to our author's own chronology, forty years after this æra. We shall consider his testimony first, not only as this is the order observed by Dr P. in his second work ; but as his concessions, with respect to Philo, may tend to illustrate the weakness of his reasoning against the doctrine of the Paraphrasts.

Our author, in the History of Corruptions, acknowledges, that Philo “ went before the Christians in the personification of the Logos, vol. i. p. 30.” But he does not say whether this was a real, or only an allegorical personification. He indeed seems to admit that it was real, as it is added ; “ For he calls this divine Word a *second God*.” Perhaps, this proof might be preferred, as apparently insinuating that Philo had no idea of unity of essence.

Dr P's words, in their connexion, discover an inclination to deprive the friends of the doctrine of the Trinity, of any advantage from the testimony of Philo : “ For he calls “ this divine Word a *second God*, and sometimes attributes “ the creation of the world to this second God, thinking “ it below the majesty of the great God himself. He also “ says, that he is neither unbegotten, like God, nor begotten as we are, but the middle between the two “ extremes.” But supposing all this to be as our author says, what can it avail him ? In the words quoted, the pre-existence

τας εις Χριστον μεν ειρησθαι αναγκαζομενοι συντιθενται, τῆτον δε μη ειναι τον Χριστον, τολμωσι λεγειν —ελευσε·θαι δε και παθην, και βασιλευσαι, και προσκυνητον γενεσθαι Θεον ομολογουσιν· οπερ γελοιον και ανοητον· ον· μοριως αποδειξω. Dial. p. 294.

existence of the Logos is evidently assumed as a first principle ; whereas Dr P. hath to prove that all the ancient Jews expected that their Messiah should be “ no other than a “ man like themselves.” But from the writings of Soci-nians, we have had occasion to observe that, in order to avoid a confession of the supreme deity of Christ, they will submit to any opinion concerning him, however absurd and contrary to their own system. They will rather join their forces with the Arians, however bitter their contentions at times, than *fall under* him, by confessing that *his throne is for ever and ever*. Like the harlot, the false mother, they will prefer a division of the child to an acknowledgment of the true parent.

But it is at least questionable, if Philo meant as the Doctor interprets. According to him, “ he attributes the “ creation of the world to this second God, *thinking* it below the majesty of the great God himself \*.” Here we have an instance of the great freedom which the Doctor uses with the words of others. Hath Philo himself said, that he thought it “ below the majesty of the great God “ to create this world ?” If so, how does he express himself ?

In a passage preserved by Eusebius †, he calls the Logos *a second God*. But, as it appears that the ancient Jews understood the word *Elohim* as sometimes denoting *persons*, for which reason, it is thought, they have rendered the plural noun by the singular Θεός, in the Septuagint ; it has been inferred that Philo, when he called the Logos a *second God*, only meant the *second person* ‡. It cannot be refused, indeed, that in a variety of passages he speaks of the Logos as inferior to *Him who is*. But when this kind of language occurs,

\* Hist. Cor. vol. i. p. 30.

† Praepar. Evangel. lib. 7. c. 13. Bedford's Serm. p. 71.

‡ Ibid.



occurs, it may be difficult to prove, that Philo does not view the Logos in a delegated character, entirely different from what belongs to him essentially. For he undoubtedly considers him as both the Son of God, and the Mediator between God and man. Although this manner of expression should be joined with what respects his essence, it may easily be accounted for from the writer's viewing the same person in two lights so very different. Even in the sacred records, we find the language of supremacy, and of subjection, that which is peculiar to God, and that which belongs to man, most intimately connected in the description of him whose name is *Wonderful*.

As a proof of this inferiority attributed by Philo to the Logos, Dr P. quotes that passage in which he is described "as the middle between the two extremes." But had he done Philo the justice to have quoted his words more fully, it would have appeared that he has a special respect to the Logos in his mediatory character. "The Father of all things," he says, "has bestowed this most admirable gift upon this Prince of Angels, his most ancient *Logos*, that he should stand as a mediator to judge between the creature and the Creator. He therefore intercedes with him who is immortal, in behalf of mortals. And on the other hand, he acts the part of an ambassador, being sent from the supreme King to his subjects. And this gift he so willingly accepts, as to glory in it, saying, And I have stood between God and you, being neither begotten as God, nor begotten as mortals, but one in the middle between two extremes, acting the part of an hostage with both; with the Creator, as a pledge that he will never be provoked to destroy, or desert the world, so as to suffer it to run from order into confusion; and with creatures, to give them this certain hope, that God, being reconciled, will never cease to take care of his own workmanship.

“workmanship. For I proclaim peace to the creation  
 “from that God who removes war, and introduces and  
 “preserves peace for ever.”

Thus his words, when fairly exhibited, appear in a very different point of view. When he calls the Father *the supreme King*. he evidently speaks of the Logos in a delegated and assumed character. Shall we therefore conclude, that he denied his proper deity? With equal propriety may it be inferred, that all who acknowledge Christ as Mediator, deny that he is God. The most accurate human writer may easily be represented as a heretic, by culling out a few words without any regard to the connexion, or to the general spirit of his work.

But although it should be supposed that Philo considered the Logos as in some respect inferior to the Father; nay, although this could be proved; it would be no sufficient evidence that the Jews did not believe the existence of a plurality of persons in one nature. For it is well known, that many who have been zealous for the doctrine of a Trinity in unity, have had their minds so strangely warped with respect to this great mystery, as to speak of the subordination of the Son even as God, of the derivation of deity from the Father, &c. Understanding the language of Philo with the greatest severity, it cannot be supposed that

\* Τῷ δὲ ἀρχαγγέλῳ καὶ πρεσβυτάτῳ λόγῳ δῶρεαν ἐξαιρετὸν ἐδῶκεν ὅτα ὅλα γεννησας πατήρ, ἵνα μεθ' ὁρίσῃς, τὸ γενομένον διακρίνητε πεποιηκότος. ὁ δὲ αὐτὸς ἰκέτης μὲν ἐστὶ τὸ θνητὸν κηραίνοντος αἰεὶ πρὸς ἀφθαρτον, πρεσβυτῆς δὲ τοῦ ἡγεμονοῦ πρὸς τὸ ὑπηκοῦν. Αἰσθάνεται δὲ ἐπὶ τῇ δῶρεα, καὶ σεμνυνομένης αὐτὴν ἐκδιηγείται φασκῶν, Καγὼ εἰσηκεῖν ἀνά μεσον κυρίῳ καὶ ὑμῶν, ὥστε ἀγεννητὸς ὡς ὁ Θεὸς ὢν, ὥστε γεννητὸς ὡς ὑμεῖς, ἀλλὰ μέσος τῶν ἀκρῶν, ἀμφοτέροις ὁμηρευῶν· πᾶρα μὲν τῷ φυτευσαντί πρὸς πῖσιν τοῦ μή συμπαν ἀφανίσαι ποτε καὶ ἀποσῆναι τὸ γένος, ἀκοσμίαν ἀντικόσμου ἐλθόμενον· πᾶρα δὲ τῷ φυντί, πρὸς εὐελπίδιαν τοῦ μηποτε τὸν ἰλεῶν Θεὸν πωρριδεῖν τὸ ἴδιον ἔργον. ἐγὼ γὰρ ἐπικηρυκεύσομαι τὰ εἰρηναῖα γενέσει πᾶρα τοῦ κωθαίρειν πολέμου ἐγνωκὸς εἰρηνήφυλακος αἰεὶ Θεῦ. Quis rerum divinarum hæres sit, p. 397.



that he went any further. For he declares the eternity of the Logos in such terms as to oppose him to all creatures. “Moses,” he says, “has not likened the rational soul to  
 “any of the things which are created, but has pronounced  
 “it to be the image of that which is divine and invisible;  
 “reckoning it proper that it should be consubstantiated  
 “and conformed to the seal of God, the character of which  
 “is his *eternal* Word.—Therefore it is said that man is  
 “*made after the image of God*, but not after the image of  
 “any creature \*.”

He asserts the necessary existence of the same divine Person. Addressing himself to others, while speaking of the Logos, he says: “You profess to have the same Father;  
 “not mortal, but immortal, the man of God, who being the  
 “Word of the Eternal, is himself also necessarily immor-  
 “tal †.” He evidently ascribes the same eternal and neces-  
 sary existence to the Logos, as to the Father. He declares the absolute perfection and all-sufficiency of his glorious sub-  
 ject. “Unity,” he says, “can admit, neither of addition, nor  
 “of subtraction, being the image of God, who alone is  
 “all-sufficient. For other things are by nature vain, and if  
 “there is any solidity in them, it is constricted by the  
 “Word of God. For this is a bond or glue, compacting  
 “every essence. But he, who connects and conjoins all  
 “things,

\* Ο·δε μεγας Μωυσης υδενι των γεγονοτων της λογικης ψυχης το ειδος ομοιω, ωνομασεν αλλ’ ειπεν αυτην τη θειω και αορατῃ εικονα, δοκιμον ειναι νομισας, υσιωθειςαν και τυπωθειςαν σφραγιδι Θεω, ης ο χαρακτηρ εστιν αιδιος λογος —Διο και λεγεται, κατ’ εικονα Θεω τον ανθρωπον γεγενησθαι, υ μην κατ’ εικονα τινος, των γεγονοτων. De Plantatione Noe, p. 169.

† Τον αυτον επιγεγραμμενοι πατερα, υ θ ητον; αλλ’ αθανατον, αν-  
 θρωπον Θεω, ος τε αιδιε λογος ω’, εξ αναγκης και αυτος εστιν αφθαρτος.  
 De Confusione Linguar. p. 255.

“ things, is perfectly his own completion, and needs no  
“ other \*.”

If Philo did not mean to declare that the Logos was of the *same essence* with the Father, what sense can we impose on the following assertions? “ The Logos is similar to no  
“ sensible object; but he is the image of God, the most an-  
“ cient of all intelligible things, the nearest to him who is  
“ established in truth, there being no line of difference †.”  
“ For his Logos is not made by striking of the air (allu-  
“ ding to the word of man); it is free of all mixture, in-  
“ corporeal, naked, and differing in no respect from unity ‡.”

He evidently maintains the doctrine of a Trinity. For he says, “ He who is, is on each side attended by his  
“ nearest powers, of which the one is *creative*, and the  
“ other *kingly*. The creative is God, by which he found-  
“ ed and adorned the universe. The kingly is Lord. It  
“ is fit that the creature should be governed by his Maker.  
“ Therefore he who is in the middle, being thus attended  
“ by

\* Μονας δε ετε προσθηκην, ετε αφαιρεσιν δεχεσθαι πεφυκεν, εικων  
ετα τε μονε πληρης Θεου. χαυνα γαρ τα τε αλλα εξ εαυτων, ει δε  
ωε και πυκνωθεν ειη, λογω σφιγγεται θειω. πολλα γαρ εσι και δεσμος  
ουτος, τα παντα της εστιας εκπεπληρωκως. ο δ' ειρας και συνηφηνας  
εκασα, πληρης αυτος εαυτε κυριως εστιν, ε δεηθεις ετερη τοπαραπαν.  
Quis rerum divinarum hæres, p. 396.

† Ο δ', υπερανω τητων λογος θειος, εις ορατον εκ ηλθεν ιδεαν, ατε  
μηδενι των κατ' αισθησιν εμφανης ων, αλλ' αυτος εικων υπαρχων Θεου,  
των νοητων απαξαπαντων ο πρεσβυτατος, ο εγγυτατω, μηδενος οντος  
μεθοριε διαστηματος, τε μονε ο εστιν αψευδως αφιδρυμενος. De Pro-  
fugis, p. 363.

‡ Ου γαρ εστιν ο λογος αυτω γεγωνως αερος πληζις,, αναμειγνυμενος,  
αλλω το περαπαν εδενι, αλλα και ασωματος τε, και γυμνος, αδιαφο-  
ρων μοναδος. Quod Deus sit immutabilis, p. 238.



“ by both his powers, exhibits to the discerning mind some-  
 “ times the appearance of *one*, and sometimes of *three* \*.”

But with respect to creation, the sentiments of Philo assume a different aspect in our author's second work. In the first, he has told us that Philo “ attributes the creation  
 “ of the world to the second God, thinking it below the  
 “ majesty of the great God himself.” But in the second, we are informed that “ Philo was so much a Jew that he  
 “ ascribed proper creation to God the Father only, and the  
 “ forming of created matter to the Logos †.” This is a strange reverse of matters, indeed! But the learned gentleman must meet with a little indulgence. For here, in the creation of his own fancy, he gives form to what had been formerly left in the state of chaos. So little did he understand his author, that he mistook the instrument for the proper agent, and considered that as a proof of inferiority, which is now found to be a standing mark of supremacy.

But it is merely doing justice to Philo, to inquire if, in the place referred to, there is any evidence of his denying proper creation to the Logos. According to Dr P. he expresses himself in this manner. “ He being produced, imi-  
 “ tating his Father, and regarding his patterns, reduced  
 “ things into form †.” But what our author renders *produced*, ought to be *begotten*. The literal meaning of the passage is, “ He, being begotten,” or, “ He, who is the be-  
 “ gotten, imitating the ways of his Father, and observing  
 “ his

\* Πατερ μεν των ολων ο μεσος, ος εν ταις ιεραις γράφαις κυριω ονοματι καλειται ο ων· αι δε παρ' εκατερα πρεσβυταται και εγγυταται τε οντος δυναμεις· ων η μεν ποιητικη, η δε βασιλικη προσαγορευεται· και η μεν ποιητικη Θεος· ταυτη γαρ εθηκε τε και διεκοσμησε το παν· η δε βασιλικη κυριος. Θεις γαρ αρχειν και κρατειν το πεποιηκος τε γενομενος· δορυφορευμενος εν ο μεσος υφ' εκατερας των δυναμεων, παρεχει τη ορατικη διανοια, τοτε μεν ενος, τοτε δε τριων φαντασιαν. De Abrahamo, p. 287.

† Ear. Opin. vol. ii. p. 14.

† Ibid p. 15.

“his archetypal patterns, produces forms \*.” Dr P.’s translation, in consequence of the word *αρχετυπα* being overlooked, would naturally lead the reader to suppose that the *patterns* meant by Philo were sensible, that they were some external works of the Father. Our author could not be a stranger to the sense in which the Jew uses the term *archetypal*. For he has quoted different passages in which it occurs, as expressly signifying what is merely intellectual, in contradistinction to objects of sense. Thus he introduces Philo as saying, that “the intelligible and incorporeal world is the *archetype* of that which is visible, consisting of invisible ideas, as this does of visible bodies †.” The ancient writer supposes these archetypal patterns to be in the Logos himself, as he is the image of the Father ‡. *Εἰδὴ* evidently signifies sensible forms or visible objects, as opposed to patterns merely ideal. Thus, the whole work of creation is ascribed immediately to the Logos.

Dr P’s translation makes the language self-contradictory. For if Philo had meant that the Word merely *reduced* the works of his Father *into form*, it would never have been said that he “imitated his ways.” Had this been the case, these works must still have been in an undigested state. How could he “observe the patterns” of the Father, when all things are supposed to have been *without form and void*?

Did it seem necessary, I might mention a great variety of passages, which clearly prove that Philo ascribes the whole of creation to the Logos. But it may suffice to refer to a former quotation, in which this matter is set in the clearest light. There he asserts that “the creative power is God, by which he, who is, *founded and adorned* the universe.”

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C H A P.

\* Ο γεννηθείς μεντοι μιμνημένος τὰς τῷ πατρὶ οὐδας, πρὸς παραδειγματὰ ἀρχετυπα ἐκεῖνῃ βλέπων, ἐμορφε εἰδὴ. De Confus. Ling. p. 258.

† Ear. Opin. vol. ii. 6.

De Mundi O. 6.



## C H A P. II.

*That Philo did not borrow from Plato, in personifying the Logos ; and that Plato was not the Inventor of this Doctrine.*

“ BUT what avails,” may it be said, “ the testimony of  
 “ Philo, as it is known that he was tinctured with Pla-  
 “ tonic philosophy ?” Indeed, this is the sum of Dr P’s  
 objection. “ It has been observed that after the transla-  
 “ tion of the Old Testament into Greek,—in consequence  
 “ of which the Jewish religion became better known to  
 “ the Greeks, and especially to the philosophers of Alexan-  
 “ dria, the more learned of the Jews had recourse to an  
 “ allegorical method of interpreting what they found to be  
 “ most objected to in their sacred writings, and by this  
 “ means pretended to find in the books of Moses, and the  
 “ Prophets, all the great principles of the Greek philoso-  
 “ phy, and especially that of Plato which at that time was  
 “ most in vogue. In this method of interpreting Scripture,  
 “ Philo, a learned Jew of Alexandria, far excelled all who  
 “ had gone before him \*.”

This objection hath been formerly made, and hath been fully answered by different writers, particularly by the learned Bp Kidder †. But it is common with the disciples of Socinus to reply to the answers given to their objections, merely by bringing them forth anew, with as much form and importance, as if they had never made their appearance before. But till they shew the insufficiency of answers already given, little more is requisite than, after their own example, although with far more propriety, to give the substance of what hath been advanced by former writers. According to an ordinary rule, *Affermanti incum-*  
*bit*

\* Hist Cor. vol. i. p. 23.

† Demonstration, Part iii. p. 111. 112.

*bit probatio.* But there is not a shadow of evidence offered in support of this mighty objection. Can one proof be brought from Philo, that he really borrowed the doctrine of a Trinity, or of the Logos, from Plato? On the contrary, does he not all along support these doctrines by testimonies from the Law and the Prophets? He produces no expressions from Plato, in support of this article of his creed. He would very naturally have adopted this plan in order to shew the conformity of the one to the other, had he so earnestly wished to assimilate the scriptural to the Platonic doctrine. To suppose that one author hath borrowed from another, merely because of some general conformity of doctrine, or similarity of particular modes of expression, especially when he expressly calls in a third, and owns this as his authority, is unfair; and to assert it, is to beg what ought to be proved.

This exception to the testimony of Philo would be more plausible, were he the only Jewish writer who had used such expressions. But it will appear, not only that the Paraphrasts used the same language, but that they had the same sentiments with Philo. Dr P. indeed, overthrows this objection by his own concession. He acknowledges that Philo “made a much more substantial personification of “the divine Logos than any of the proper Platonists had “done\*.” Now, as we know the firm persuasion of the Jews concerning the unity of God, although we should suppose one of that nation tinged with *heathenish ideas*; his motive for carrying them farther than heathens themselves is absolutely inconceivable. Certainly, it is most natural to think, that he would not have gone the same lengths with them, unless he had been fully convinced that the avowed principles of his nation allowed him to carry these ideas as far as he hath actually done.



The objection, indeed, seems to fall by its own weight. It has great appearance of self-contradiction. For it is asserted, “that the Jews had recourse to an allegorical method “of interpreting what they found to be most objected to in “their sacred writings.” But from the connection, it certainly must be inferred that “what was most objected to” was that which they, in the event, interpreted allegorically, and what, according to this method of interpretation, contained “all the great principles of the Greek philosophy, and especially that of Plato.” But will our author please to shew, how that could be *most objected to*, which might be interpreted as having the greatest affinity to the Philosophy which was most in vogue? Did the Platonists misunderstand the Scriptures so far, as especially to object to those passages which, when explained by a Jew, approached most nearly to their own system? This favours very much of mystery. The learned Gentleman must certainly find a more satisfying reason for the recourse which the Jews are said to have had “to an allegorical method of “interpreting.” But the fact is; he wishes that interpretation to be considered as *allegorical* which is strictly literal; and is, therefore, under a necessity of framing a reason for the pretended change. Any one who takes the most superficial view of the writings of Philo must observe, that he not only allegorizes, but that he often obscures a subject, abundantly clear of itself, by the intemperate use of allegory. He frequently indulges this humour in the descriptions which he gives of the Logos. But we are not thence to conclude that his very exhibition of him as a person was a mere allegory. On the same ground might the personality of the Father be denied.

But so far is it from being true that Jewish writers borrowed from Plato, that there is the greatest reason to believe the very reverse. The Doctor himself confesses, that “as  
“ Plato

“ Plato had travelled into the East, it is probable that he  
 “ there learned the doctrine of divine emanations, and his  
 “ ideas of the origin of this visible system \*.

As it is granted that Plato “ travelled into the East,” it is also known that he went into Egypt. This is mentioned by Apuleius, a heathen writer and one of his disciples. Plato, he says, went thither, “ that he might learn the rites of the prophets †.” Numenius the Pythagorean calls Plato “ Moses Atticising” or “ speaking Greek ‡.” Aristobulus, a Jewish writer, says; “ It is plain, that Plato followed our law, and that he diligently studied the several parts of it ||.” Josephus also asserts that Plato especially imitated Moses §. The same is affirmed by Christian writers. Clemens Alexandrinus observes, that “ Plato was acquainted with prophecy;” and that he “ derived his philosophy from the Jews.” He even calls him “ the Hebrew Philosopher;” asserting that the Greek sages were generally “ thieves, taking the choicest of their opinions from Moses and the Prophets, without thankful acknowledgment \*\*.” Justin Martyr declares, that Plato “ drew many things from the Hebrew rivulets,” and that “ whatsoever he said devoutly of God, or of his worship, he stole from the Hebrew Philosophy ††.” Theodoret, Joannes Philoponus, Eusebius, Ambrose, Augustin and Tatian assert the same.

At any rate, is it not far more probable, that Plato borrowed from the Hebrews, than that they borrowed from him; as it is certain that he was in Egypt, where many Jews were settled; as we know his great diligence in acquiring

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\* Hist. Cor. vol. i. p. 28.

† De Dogmat. Platon. ap. Kidder. Part. i. p. 111.

‡ Theodoret. Cur. Graec. Affect. l. ii. ib.

|| Euseb. Praep. lib. 13. c. 12. ib.

§ Lib. 2 cont. Apion.

\*\* Strom. b. i. 5.

†† Apol. 2.



ring knowledge; and as it is otherwise unaccountable whence he received his notions of a Trinity? Was it from other Philosophers? From whom did they derive their knowledge of it? Either from imagination, or from tradition. The first is improbable, according to the opinion both of the orthodox, and of Dr P. They grant that this doctrine is above the line of human reason. He supposes it to be directly contradictory. If so, is it rational to suppose, that such men as Plato, who, it will be granted, in other instances spoke in a very sublime manner of the divine nature, would of themselves devise a doctrine so absurd as this is said to be? While all the nations around held such a multiplicity of gods, that the Greeks themselves, so early as Hesiod's age, are said to have had no less than thirty thousand, how can it be accounted for, that Plato, while he in some sense held the divine Unity, should stumble upon the number *three*?

Is it said, that he most probably had this doctrine from tradition? Where then had he this tradition? In the East, surely, whither Plato, and other Philosophers before him, travelled. And whence did it originate? Certainly, from the remains of primitive Revelation, or from intercourse with the Hebrews, whose sacred writings are undoubtedly more ancient than those of any other people. Can it be supposed that Plato travelled into the East for the express purpose of acquiring knowledge, and never once heard of those most ancient of all writings; especially when the Jews were at this time dispersed through so many countries? Is it supposable, that if he heard of them, he would not wish to learn something of their contents? Can we entertain such an opinion of one who was at so much pains to be initiated into the Egyptian mysteries? Besides, is it not certain that other Philosophers before him brought the same opinions from the East?

But why should we multiply proofs? We have the confession of Plato himself, that this Philosophy was not the

fruit of his own reflection, but partly derived from ancient tradition. Nay, he materially acknowledges, that he derived it from the Jews. He says, “This story of one and  
 “many (ἐν καὶ πολλὰ) is a tradition which the ancients who  
 “were better, and lived nearer the Gods than we, trans-  
 “mitted to us \*.” He asserts, that the safest and most cer-  
 tain way of proving the immortality of the soul, is διαλογω  
 θεσ τινος “by some divine word or tradition †.” He ac-  
 knowledges, that “the first institution of letters was from  
 the Gods, by certain Barbarians;” that “he and the rest of  
 “the Greeks received their choicest traditions and learning  
 “from certain Barbarians more ancient than themselves;”  
 and that they “gave a better form to what they thus re-  
 “ceived ‡.” He speaks of a Phenician fable, respecting  
 the fraternity “of all men not out of the earth||;”  
 which undoubtedly refers to the formation of Adam. He  
 also mentions “Syrian fables.”

It is well known that the Greeks called all other nations Barbarians. Bochart seems justly to conclude, that Herodotus speaks of the Jews under the name of Phenicians. For he says, that “certain Phenicians came from the coast  
 “of the Red sea.” On this Josephus makes the following ob-  
 servations; “This writer appears to be certain that the Sy-  
 “rians of Palestine are circumcised. Now, the fact is, that  
 “in Palestine, the Jews only are circumcised; and as  
 “he is positive in his assertion, what he says respecting this  
 “circumstance can refer to no other people §.” Xenophon  
 also testifies that the Jews were called Syrians \*\*.

Is it inquired, why Plato did not actually name the Jews?  
 Many reasons might be given; among which that already

B 4

mentioned

\* Philebus, p 17. ap. Gales Court of the Gentiles, p. 2. b. 3 c. 2.

† Phaedo, p 85. 1b.

‡ Cratylus. 426. 1b.

|| De Republ. lib. 3. 1b.

§ Vid. Joseph. cont. Apion. l. i. Bocharti Phaleg. l. 4. c. 34.

\*\* Ap. Gale. part 1. b. 1. c. 4.



mentioned is one. Being neighbours of the Phenicians, who were so universally known by their extensive commerce, and also of the Syrians; they were spoken of under these names which were more familiar to strangers. Origen\* gives another reason; that, because of the peculiarity of their religion, and separation from the rest of mankind, the Jews were so hated by other nations, that Plato might think it impolitic expressly to mention their name, lest it might expose the doctrines which he had derived from them to contempt.

But Plato was not the only Philosopher who borrowed from the Jews. Pythagoras undoubtedly did the same. Hermippus, who writes his life, affirms that he “translated many of the Jewish Laws into his own Philosophy.” Diogenes Laertius says, that “he went to the Hebrews.” The same is attested by Strabo and Porphyry, and by Aristobulus the Jew †. Josephus also asserts, that “many of the customs of the Jews are incorporated into the Philosophy of Pythagoras ‡.” Clearchus, a disciple of Aristotle, declares that he saw a Jew, with whom his master had often conversed, according to the words which he ascribes to Aristotle; “equally to the gratification and improvement of those who could relish the happiness of such a conversation ||.” It is also asserted by various writers, that Pherecydes, who is supposed to have been the preceptor of Pythagoras, was much indebted to the Jews.

Socinians still seem to speak of Plato, as if he had been the first Philosopher who broached the doctrine of a Trinity. But there is undoubted evidence that it was known to the heathen, many ages before him. His own disciple Plotinus thus expresses himself on this subject: “That these doctrines are not new, nor of yesterday, but have been  
“ very

\* Cont. Cels. lib. 4.

† Gale. p. 2. b. 2. c. 5.

‡ Cont. Apion. lib. 1.

|| Ibid.



“very anciently delivered, though obscurely (the discourses  
 “now extant being but explanations of them) appears from  
 “Plato’s own writings; Parmenides before him having in-  
 “sisted on them \*.” Again; “Parmenides also agreed in  
 “this acknowledgment of a Trinity of divine or archical  
 “hypostases †.” As many learned men are of opinion that  
 the *Tetractys*, by which it is said, Pythagoras used to  
 swear, was nothing but the *Tetragrammaton* or name of four  
 letters, of which he had received some account from the  
 Jews; it is also asserted that he held a Trinity of divine  
 hypostases, and therefore spoke of God sometimes as a  
*monad*, sometimes as a *mind*, and sometimes as the *soul* of  
 the world ‡. Thence Jamblichus says in Proclus, that there  
 “were three Gods also praised by the Pythagoreans ||.”

It is clear that Orpheus asserted a Trinity, under the  
 names of Phanes, Uranus and Chronus, one of these he cal-  
 led *πρωτογονος Θεος*, *the first begotten God*. Wolfius asserts  
 from Damascius, that Orpheus introduced a triform deity §.  
 “Timotheus the chronographer affirms that Orpheus had  
 “long ago declared, that all things were made by a co-es-  
 “sential or consubstantial Trinity \*\*.” He uses the three  
 names, *Light*, *Counsel* and *Life*; and asserts that by these  
 three all things were made. He also speaks of the Divine  
 Word, and recommends a fixed adherence to it ††.

There were likewise several hints of a Trinity in the  
 Egyptian doctrines. Jamblichus informs us, that according  
 to the Hermaic Theology, there was “first an indivisible  
 “unity called *Eicton*; secondly a perfect Mind, understand-  
 “ing himself, and converting his cogitations into him-  
 “self, called *Emepb*, or *Cnepb*; and thirdly, the im-  
 “mediate

\* Plotin. En. 5. b. 1. ap. Cudworth’s Intellectual System, p. 546.

† Ibid. 386.

‡ Cudworth, p. 373.

|| Ibid. 547.

§ Wolf. Excerpt. ex Damasc. Anec. Graec. tom. iii. p. 252.

\*\* Ecdrenus ap. Cud. 304. †† Kidder’s Demonstration, P. 3. p. 124.

“mediate principle of generation, called by several names  
 “according to its several powers, as *Phtha*, *Ammon*,  
 “*Osiris* \*.” As Cneph was sometimes represented with an  
 egg coming out of his mouth, Eusebius, on the testimony  
 of Porphyry, says, that the egg denoted the world, “crea-  
 “ted by the eternal Logos †.”

The Persian *Mitbras*, said by his worshippers to be  
 the father and maker of all things, was commonly called  
 τριπλασιος *threefold*. Plutarch observes that Oromasdes  
 “thrice augmented or triplicated himself ‡.” In the Ora-  
 cles ascribed to Zoroaster, it is said that the Father perfec-  
 ted all things and delivered them to the second Mind, whom  
 the nations of men commonly take for the first. In a Chal-  
 daic oracle cited by Proclus, there is mention of a third hy-  
 postasis under the name of *Psyche*. This, Pletho says, they  
 also called Arimanius. In one of these Oracles, the pater-  
 nal Monad παλῆν μονας is said to be enlarged, and to gene-  
 rate two. Mention is also made of the *Duad* and *Triad*:  
 and it is asserted that “all things serve these three princi-  
 ples ||.” In another it is said §; “In all the world there  
 “shines a Trinity, of which an Unity is the head \*\*.”

Plutarch testifies that Zoroaster made a threefold distri-  
 bution of things; that he assigned the first and highest rank  
 of them to Oromasdes, who, in the oracles, is called the  
 Father; the lowest to *Arimanes*, and the middle to *Mitb-  
 ras*, who in the same oracles is likewise called the second  
 Mind ††. That Sanchoniathon, the Phenician, borrows  
 from the books of Moses, seems undeniable. In his account  
 of creation, he speaks of the operation of a wind or spirit  
 on the Chaos. He attributes the production of our first  
 parents

\* Jamblichus de Myster. Aegypt. sec. S. c. 3. ap. Cud. 354.

† Praep. Evan l. 3. c. 11. Cud. 352. ‡ Plutarch de Isid. et Osir. Cud. 287.

|| Kidder, p. 3. 128.

§ Παντι γαρ εν κοσμω λαμπει τριας, ἥς Μόνας ἀρχαι.

\*\* Leslie's Söcin. Contr. Dial. 1. p. 48.

†† Plutarch, ubi sup.



parents to Colpias and Baau. As *Baau* is undoubtedly the same word with *Bobu* in the Hebrew text, which we render *void*, *Colpias* is, with the greatest probability, supposed to be a compound of these three Hebrew words, *Kol Pi Jah*, *The voice of the mouth of the Lord*. Thus he mentions the Lord, the Voice of the mouth of the Lord, and the Spirit \*.

Lord Monboddo has observed, that “at this day the doctrine of the three persons of the deity in one substance is an essential part of the creed of the Brahmins,” and that, “they call these persons by the same names that we do, *the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost*. The first,” he adds, “in their language is *Rama*, the second *Visnou*, and the third *Crisna*. This fact is told in a French book, written by La Croze, entitled *Histoire du Christianisme des Indes*, vol. 2. book 4. p. 48. And he relates it upon the credit of one Manuel Godhino, a Portuguese, who was in India in the year 1663. And I have heard the fact attested by an acquaintance of mine, who had been many years in India †.” It is undeniable that the Brahmins hold the doctrine of a Trinity, in a certain sense. The names, however, are expressed differently by different writers. The Danish Missionaries call the three persons *Isuren, Wischtnu* and *Biruma*. But it does not appear that the Brahmins really hold an unity of substance. For according to the writers formerly mentioned, they believe in one supreme God, above these three. Thus they introduce a Brahmin as saying; “We allow but one primary and sovereign Being, and constantly profess that the great *Triad* of deities acknowledge him for their sovereign Lord and Master ‡.” As they hold, however, that these three

\* Gale's Court. p. 2. b. 1. C. 3. Bedford's Sermons, p. 27, 98.

† Origin and Progress of Language, vol. v.

‡ Conferences between the Danish Missionaries and Malabarian Brahmins, p. 2.



three were produced by him, it is probable that their Trinity is a corruption of the original doctrine. They have many inferior deities. But they assert, that they are all the vicegerents of the *Triad* \*.

It is not meant to defend the ideas of the different heathen nations on this subject, or to assert that they agreed with Christians in their doctrine of a Trinity. But these things are mentioned, to shew that this doctrine was much older than Plato ; nay, that there was something like a general notion of a Trinity even among the Gentiles. And we cannot rationally suppose that this opinion, in which nations so remote, both as to time and situation, agreed, could originate from mere chance. It is much more reasonable to think that it sprung from some ancient tradition. Indeed, Proclus expressly declares that it was *θεοπαράδοτης θεολογία*, “ a Theology of divine tradition,” or “ revelation.” Were it necessary, it might easily be proved, that great part of the learning of the heathen was derived, either from ancient tradition, or from revelation ; and particularly, that their mythology was in general merely a corruption of sacred history †.

### C H A P. III.

*Of the Personality ascribed to the Logos by Philo ; and of the Unitarian Doctrine of Occasional Personality.*

AS the Doctor finds, even after a re-examination of Philo, that it cannot be denied that he makes the Logos a person, he devises a new solution of the difficulty, in his History

\* Ibid.

† Vid. Bocharti Phaleg et Canaan, Cudworth's Intellectual System, Gale's Court of the Gentiles, Millar's Propagation of Christianity, and Banier's Mythology.

tory of Early Opinions. He had formerly left the orthodox to make the most of Philo, after stigmatizing him as a Platonist. But having discovered, which is more than has been discovered in former ages, that “the Platonists themselves proceeded no farther than to what may be called “a strongly figurative personification of the divine intellect;” he expects to deprive his opponents even of the little service that Philo might have done them. He formerly observed, that “Plato, according to Lactantius, gave “the name of a *second God*” to the Logos, “saying, The “Lord and Maker of the universe, whom we justly call “God, made a second God, *visible* and *sensible* †.” However, matters are so changed, that the Logos merely “constitutes what they (the Platonists) called the intelligible “world, or the world to be perceived by the mind, and “not by the *senses* ‡.”

But, even on this ground, the learned gentleman cannot agree with himself. For in the course of forty-eight pages he quits his *second* theory, and returns to the *first*; because he finds it more suitable to his present purpose. This is to shew that the Christian fathers “obstinately held to the “doctrine of Christ being nothing more than the *Logos*, or “the proper *reason*, *wisdom*, or *power*, of the Father;” lest they should seem to the lower people to introduce *another God*. He contrasts their conduct with that of the Platonists. They, he says, “had no difficulty at all on this account, as they had no measures to keep with unitarians, “but rather wished to stand well with those who held a “multiplicity of Gods. They, therefore, *never* pretended “to believe that their *three principles* were *one*, or resolvable into one §.” Here he is so certain of the fact, that he assigns a reason for it.

But

\* Vol. ii. p. 2.

† Ear. Opin. vol. ii. p. 2.

‡ Hist. of Corrupt. vol. i. p. 29.

§ Ibid. p. 48, 49.



But as Plato's "visible and sensible being" is for a time metamorphosed into one "not perceived by the senses;" Philo's *person* now appears to be only an occasional one. The Doctor grants, that "in Philo, we find something "more nearly approaching to a real personification of the "Logos," than in the writings of the Platonists. Their Logos, being only "a strongly figurative personification," is deprived of personality altogether. But because Philo "approaches more nearly to a real personification," something more is allowed to his, as it is a step nearer to real existence. An occasional existence is ascribed to it. "He "did not like them (the Platonising Christians) make a "permanent intelligent person of the Divine Logos, he made "an occasional one of it, making it the visible medium of "all the communications of God to man, that by which "he both made the world, and also conversed with the pa- "triarchs of the Old Testament \*." It is then granted that Philo really made a *person* of the Logos. This is so far good. However, the word *occasional* is thrown in, to deprive this concession of all its weight. But hath Philo himself said, that he considered the Logos as an occasional person only? The Doctor does not assert this. He only infers it. Now the premises, from which he forms so extraordinary a conclusion, must certainly be very clear. Hath Philo said, that this Logos, after being emitted by God is again absorbed? No! Hath he said, that he hath a perishable existence? The very contrary. For he calls him the "eternal Logos,—of necessity immortal." What then? Philo, when declaring the faith of the ancient church with respect to the Logos, happens to express himself thus: "This world of ideas has no place but the Di-

"vine

\* Ear. Opin. vol. ii. p. 3.



“vine Logos which disposes all things\*.” The Doctor adds, “In another passage also, speaking of the different significations of *place*, he says, that ‘one of them is the divine Logos, the whole of which God himself has filled with incorporeal powers.’ In this place the Logos is evidently nothing more than the divine mind itself, or the seat of his ideas †.” Although Dr P. could clearly shew that Philo in some instances uses the term *Logos* as merely signifying the divine mind, it would not amount to a proof that he never uses it as the name of a proper person. But the connection and structure of the first passage, afford several strong presumptions, that even here a person is meant. For as Philo, when elsewhere describing the sensible world, calls it the younger son of God, as contradistinguished from the Logos, whom he calls the elder ‡, he uses the same language here. He also ascribes the same work to the Logos, as in another place to that creative power which, according to his idea, attends him who is; affirming that he “adorned the universe ||.” Even here he declares, that the Logos is “the power which made the world.” When he adds that this power “hath its source with the true good,” he certainly intends to distinguish the Logos from the Father. Why does he speak of *source*, unless he mean to express personal derivation? Can “the divine mind” be said to have a *source* in any sense. The Doctor certainly misunderstands that sentence, in

\* Οὐδ’ ο ἐκ τῶν ἰδεῶν κόσμος ἄλλον ἂν εἴχοι τόπον, ἢ τὸν θεῖον λόγον τὸν ταῦτα διακοσμήσαντα· ἐπεὶ τίς ἂν εἴη τῶν δυνάμεων αὐτῆς τόπος ἕτερος, ὅς γενοιτ’ ἀνικανός, ὃ λέγω πασάς, ἀλλὰ μίαν ἀκράτον ἢ τινα, δεξασθαι τε καὶ χωρῆσαι· δυνάμεις δὲ καὶ ἡ κοσμοποιητικὴ, τῇ γῇ ἐχούσα τὸ πρὸς ἀληθειαν ἀγαθόν. De Mundi Opificio, p. 3. G.

† Ear. Opin. vol. ii. p. 4.

‡ Quod Deus sit Immutabilis, p. 232.

|| De Abraham. p. 287.

in which he makes Philo say, “For what other proper  
“place can there be to receive, and contain, not only all  
“*ideas*, but even a single idea?” In this sentence Philo  
does not speak of *ideas*, but of *powers*.

But as our author undoubtedly views both the passages  
quoted in the same sense, and the latter, indeed, as most  
clearly respecting “the divine mind,” by it we may cer-  
tainly judge of the meaning of the former. From the con-  
nexion it evidently appears that Dr P. has grossly mis-  
applied it. Giving the different significations of place, Phi-  
lo says: “It is understood in a threefold sense. First, it  
“denotes *space*, which is filled with bodies. Secondly, the  
“divine Logos, whom God himself has completely filled  
“with incorporeal powers. But in a third sense, God  
“himself is called *place*, because he comprehends all, and  
“is fully comprehended by none, and because he is his  
“own space, containing himself, and filled by himself a-  
“lone \*.” Here he clearly distinguishes God from his Lo-  
gos; and therefore, by the latter term does not mean “the  
“divine mind itself,” but a distinct person from him who  
is here called God.

From this passage we also learn, in what sense he says,  
“The world of ideas *could have* no other place but the  
“divine Logos. For what other place could there be to  
“receive and contain, I say not, all his *powers*, but even  
“a single one?” He plainly means to exhibit the Logos  
as infinite; and, in contradistinction to every creature, as  
alone

\* Τριχως δε επινοειται τοπος· απαξ μεν, χωρα υπο σωματος εκ-  
πεπληρωμενη. κατα δευτερον δε τροπον, ο θειος λογος, ον εκπεπληρωκεν  
ολον δι ολων ασωματοις δυναμεσιν αυτος ο θεος.—κατα δε τριτον ση-  
μαινομενον, αυτος ο θεος καλειται τοπος, τω περιεχειν μεν τα ολα, πε-  
ριεχασθαι δε προς μηδενος απλως,—η επειδηπερ αυτος εστι χωρα αυτη  
κεχωρηκως εαυτον η εμφερομενος μονω εαυτω. De Somniis, p. 447.



alone capable of containing all the ideas, and all the powers of the Father.

Is it any argument against Philo, that he calls the Logos “the image of God?” Does not the inspired writer to the Hebrews do the same? *Who is the express image of his person*, ch. i. 3. Making allowance for the imperfection of every metaphor used on this subject, there is not one passage produced by the Doctor, but might easily be proved to apply to the Logos as a person. He seems really convinced of this himself. And for this reason has he produced his new theory of occasional personality.

But have we yet found any thing from which our Author had reason to infer, that Philo believed that the Logos was an occasional person? Not a shadow of proof. Therefore he calls in the assistance of his *corps de reserve*, his forlorn hope, bold supposition. “It might be imagined,” he says, “that the Divine Being, by the emission of this “Logos in so substantial a form, would be deprived of some “of his power; but to this Philo would probably have replied, that this *second God* was only like a lamp lighted at “the original fountain of light, which did not diminish its “substance or splendor.—Or he might have supposed that “the loss sustained by the emission of the Logos was only “temporary, because he thought that the emission of the “Logos only resembled the emission of light from the sun “which was afterwards drawn into its source again\*.” All that this requires is a Spartan answer. *Probably! Might!*

A great variety of passages might be produced, which clearly prove that, although Philo could have formed the wild idea of occasional personality, he could not have thought of ascribing it to the Logos, as being totally irre-

\* Ear. Opin: vol. ii. p. 15. 16.



conciliable to his other ascriptions. Particularly, as he represents him as the manager of the world, and of all things in it, and as the vicegerent of God, it is absolutely inconceivable that he could consider him as only occasionally emitted. Illustrating these words, *The Lord is my shepherd*, he says ; “ God governs all this universe as a shepherd governs his flock, or a king his people ; over-ruling and managing the earth, water, air and fire, and whatever any of these contains, whether vegetables or animals, things mortal or spiritual ; particularly, the ordinances of heaven, the revolutions of the sun and moon, and the changes and orderly movements of the other stars : all these does God govern according to the strictest justice, having set over them his righteous Logos, his first begotten Son, who takes the charge of this sacred flock, as the vicegerent of the great king. Therefore it is said, *Behold, I send mine Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way* \*.”

Describing the great revolutions of states and empires, and the changes that take place in the world in general, he says, “ Is it not like a ship tossed hither and thither on the waves of the sea, now by prosperous, and then by adverse winds ? For the Word of God, which the multitude call Fortune, dances on the globe. Thence, being constantly in motion through cities, and nations, and countries, he supports some with the things that belong to others,

\* Καθ' ὡς γὰρ τινὰ ποιμνὴν, γῆν καὶ ὕδωρ καὶ ἀέρα καὶ πῦρ, καὶ ὅσα ἐν ταῖς, φυτὰ τε αὐτὰ καὶ ζῶα, τὰ μὲν θνήσκει, τὰ δὲ θεία· ἐτι δὲ ἡρᾶν φῦσιν, καὶ ἡλίου καὶ σελήνης περιόδους, καὶ τῶν ἀλλῶν ἀστέρων τροπὰς τε αὐτὰ καὶ χροῖας ἐναρμονίας, ὡς ποιμνὴν καὶ βασιλεὺς ὁ θεὸς ἀγείρει κατὰ δίκην καὶ νόμον, προεστῆσάμενος τὸν ὀρθὸν αὐτῷ λόγον πρωτογονίου υἱοῦ, ὅς τὴν ἐπιμελείαν τῆς ἱερᾶ ταύτης ἀγέλης, ὥσπερ μεγάλῃ βασιλεὺς ὑπαρχὸς διαδέχεται. De Agricultura, p. 152.

“thers, and all with what is provided for all, only chan-  
 “ging his conduct at different times : that the whole world  
 “may be managed as one city, according to the best form  
 “of democratical government \*.”

But why should I multiply evidence? Philo, by a single stroke of his pencil, exhibits his subject in such a light, as must for ever expose to ridicule the intruded monster of occasional personality. When accounting for the duration of things created, he ascribes it to their being “framed by  
 “him who remains, and who is never in any respect  
 “changed, the divine Logos †.

However, although in the first chapter this is only assumed as the opinion of Philo, by the time that the Doctor advances so far as the second, it is considered as proved. “The principles of Philo have been explained above, viz.  
 “that the Divine Logos could assume *occasional personality*  
 “to answer particular purposes, and then be restored into  
 “the Divine Being again ‡.” However sceptical the Doctor is as to any proof produced against his own opinions, there is no man more easy to deal with on this head, when he has himself “particular purposes to answer.” Although it were granted, as it is not, that, in the passages mentioned, Philo speaks of the Logos in such a manner as will not apply to a person; there would be a manifest sophism in the conclusion. The argument fairly stated is plainly this;

C 2'

“He

\* Χορνευει γαρ εν κυκλω λογος ο θειος, ον οι πολλοι των ανθρωπων ονομαζουσι τυχην· ειτα αει ρεων κατα πολεις και εθνη και χωρας, τα αλλων αλλοις, και πασι τα παντων επινεμει, χρονοις αυτο μονον αλλαττοντα παρ' εκαστοις· ινα ως μια πολεις η οικημενη πασα την αριστην πολιτειων αγη δημοκρατιαν. Lib Quod Deus sit immutabilis, p. 248

† Μενει γαρ η αυτη ποιότης, ατε απο μενοντος εκμαχθεισα, και μηδαμ' τρεπομενη, θειον λογον. De Profugis, p. 353.]

‡ Ibid. p. 45.



“ He who occasionally uses the term *Logos* so as not to denote a person, always means that the *Logos* is an occasional person:

“ But Philo occasionally uses the term *Logos* in this way :

“ Therefore, Philo always means by the *Logos* an occasional person only.”

Or, more simply ; “ Philo occasionally uses the word *Logos* without reference to a person ; *Ergo*, Philo means that the *Logos* is only an occasional person.” *Probatum est !*

By this ingenious plan of reasoning, one may make *quidlibet ex quolibet*. As, in every language, the same words admit of various significations, one of these may be so opposed to another as to render all language mere jargon.

But as there is no evidence that in the least can satisfy a candid enquirer, that such an idea as that of occasional personality ever entered into the mind of Philo ; how shall we account for the Doctor's certainty as to this being the opinion of that ancient writer ? Shall we suppose that he has himself any partiality for it ? The supposition would be fully as natural as some of his own, though there were no other reason for it, than his extreme anxiety to father so singular an opinion on an author to whom it was never formerly imputed, and who has in fact given no ground for the imputation. The Doctor does not mention this opinion in his *History of Corruptions*. But, in consequence of renewed investigation, having discovered that “ Marcellus of Ancyra, and other learned Christians, who were properly enough ranked among Unitarians,” embraced this idea ; and finding that the idea itself may be dignified with the high-sounding title of *Philosophical Unitarianism* \* ; he, in this treatise, ushers it in on different occasions.

\* Vol. ii. p. 46, 47.



casions. It is, indeed, a very useful notion. For an author, with this philosophical weapon in his hand, may at one blow for ever silence any being, of whatsoever order, who presumptuously rises up as a witness against what are called unitarian principles. It is the very *malleus fidei*.

But where is our author's authority for supposing such a mode of existence? Sure we are, this opinion hath no foundation in the word of God. For *on the seventh day God ended his work*, as to the formation of any new orders of beings. So anxious is Dr P. to reduce the Son of God into the rank of a mere creature, that he will rather unhinge the whole frame and order of creation, than not carry his point. Rather than not deprive him of personality, he will grant a species of it totally unknown to the rule of faith.

He says indeed; "It could not be, that upon this principle, any *new being* was introduced. For a mere power occasionally emitted, and then taken back again into its source, could not come under that description \*". But here is downright contradiction;—a mere power, and yet even a temporary personality. If it may be called a being, according to this explanation, it deserves the name of *new* more than any ever heard of before: for there is nothing that bears any resemblance to it, *either in heaven above, or in the earth beneath*. A new being it must be. For every time that it is "emitted," there is a new creation; in the scale of being, one order, rather a mere *unique* subsists, which, according to the supposition, had no existence before its emission.

But although this idea should have no foundation in scripture, it is *philosophical*. One would think that the ordinary, if not the philosophical, definition of a person were

\* Ibid. p. 48.

“ an intelligent being, or an individual of any particular order of intelligent beings, subsisting by itself.” But how does this correspond to the idea of one “ occasionally emitted from the Divine Being, and drawn into him when the purpose for which it hath been emitted is answered ?” For, according to Marcellus, “ the Logos was nothing more than a *Divine power*, voluntarily emitted by the Supreme Being ; and though in some sense *detached* from himself,” yet “ entirely dependent on him, and taken into himself again at pleasure \*.” Is a mere power a person ? Is a principle a being ? Does such a supposed power possess the essential property of a person, that of existing *per se*, as distinct from other persons or beings ? Is this philosophical ? Of that kind only which is *science falsely so called, vain deceit, after the traditions of men, and not after Christ*. But “ the thing itself is possible for a time †.” So is a Centaur, So is a mountain wholly of gold. Do they therefore exist ? Are we to reason from what is possible to what is real ? Here is the wisdom of God in suffering *the wise, who by wisdom know not God, to be taken in their own craftiness*. The doctrine of a plurality of persons, in one undivided essence, is rejected as a gross absurdity ; blasphemously compared to the ridiculous *Ab-racadabras* of the heathen ‡ ; spurned as supposing an impossibility. Yet the man who dares to use such language admits, not only of a power being occasionally converted into a person, nor merely of a person existing without the essential distinguishing property of a person, distinct subsistence ; but of one person existing in another person. For the Logos is only “ in some sense detached from” the Supreme

\* Ibid. p. 47.

† Ibid. p. 45.

‡ Vol. i. p. 53.



preme Being. He is still “nothing more than a Divine Power;” but such a power as “it might have been said, “would have been a person at the creation of the world\*.” Those who deny the eternal generation of the Son, maintain an emission of their own, of a temporary kind. Instead of a necessary generation, they hold an occasional emission. With them one essence cannot be common to more persons than one. Yet one person may be the subject of a multitude of temporary existences.

But, may it be said, is this really Dr Priestley’s opinion? The Doctor, indeed, at times expresses himself mystically, in conformity to those of whom he writes. He uses language, which, like the heathen oracles, may be interpreted either way. He deals greatly in suppositions and probabilities. And this manner of writing is very convenient. For if any thing be advanced in the heat of controversy, that is afterwards found untenable, it can easily be retracted. But you have as much certainty for this being his opinion, as he is pleased to give in many other instances. He ascribes it to “Marcellus, and other learned Christians, who were “properly enough ranked among Unitarians †.” He calls the doctrine *Philosophical Unitarianism*. He denies that thus “any new being was introduced ‡.” Thus, it is consistent with learning, with Unitarianism, with Philosophy, with the system of creation. But this is not all. He expressly says; “It is even doubtful, whether in some “cases what are called angels, were any thing more than “temporary appearances, and no permanent beings; the “mere organs of the Deity, used for the purpose of making himself known and understood by his creatures ||.”

C 4

Again,

\* Vol. ii. p. 47.

† Ibid. p. 46.

‡ Ibid. p. 48.

|| Vol. i. p. 5.

Again, “ God spake to the Patriarchs either by angels, or  
 “ some temporary appearance, which may sometimes  
 “ have been in the form of man \*.” Certain we are, the  
 Doctor hath not half so well proved, that this is the opinion of  
 Philo, as that it is his own. But it would not be matter of  
 surprize, although it were afterwards found to be only *occa-*  
*sionally* so.

Now, if it be granted, that any thing is so “ emitted  
 “ from the Supreme Being,” as to have a temporary per-  
 sonality, to perform the actions of a person, to act and  
 speak ; call it a divine power, or what you will ; let it be,  
 with unparalleled absurdity, denied that it is a person ; still  
 it can go by no other name, it can suggest no other idea.  
 Only, it has this singular property, that it is identified in  
 another person. This is a being of such a kind, that it  
 may be a person at one time, and not at another. “ For,”  
 Dr P. says, “ On this scheme, the Logos, it might have  
 “ been said, *would have been* a person at the creation  
 “ of the world ; and again, when it was employed in the  
 “ divine intercourse with the Patriarchs †.” Here is the  
 mystery of Socinianism ! the *plurality* and *unity* of the  
 sons of Reason ! Not three persons in an unity of es-  
 sence, but according to the number of the heavenly hosts,  
*ten thousand times ten thousand* existing in one person. A  
 participation of the divine nature is denied to the only be-  
 gotten Son of the Father, while, without any hesitation, all  
 those *sons of God*, called *Angels*, are admitted to this ho-  
 nour.

But our author ought seriously to consider, that thus he  
 hath virtually declared that he has no objection to the doc-  
 trine

\* Vol. i. p. 34.

† Vol. ii. p. 47.



trine of an occasional plurality. Now, it will be difficult for him to show, that what is in the divine nature at one time, may not be at another, nay, is not *always*. For with God there is *no variableness*. He ought to consider, that no Trinitarian maintains, that one person is properly *detached* from another, far less from “the Supreme Being :” and that the great difference between this unitarian plurality and ours, is, that according to the latter, one person is essentially in another, (John xiv. 10, 11.) yet so as to retain distinction of personality ; but according to the former, one person is so in another, as *at times* totally to lose this. Is the one doctrine more demonstrable from reason, or from analogy, than the other? It is no contradiction to reason, that three persons should permanently subsist in one essence : but it certainly is a contradiction, that the nature, which is plural to-day, should be singular to-morrow.

#### C H A P. IV.

*Of the Doctrine of Philo concerning Angels.—Whether he considered the Logos as the future Messiah?*

THE Doctor, having so well proved, that Philo allows only an occasional personality to the Logos, infers, that he ascribes no other kind of personality to angels. ‘According to Philo,’ it is said, “Angels are nothing more than “this divine Logos ;” so that he could not consider them as ‘having a permanent being.’ Speaking of Hagar, he says, “She was met by an Angel, which is the Logos of God \*.’ Treating of the migration of Abraham, he says, “He “that

\* Δημειον δε, το υπανταν αυτη αγγελον θειον λογον, α χρη παρξινεσοντα, &c. De Profugis, p. 352. ap. Auſt. 451.

“ that follows God must of necessity make use of the attending *logoi*, which are commonly called angels \*.” It clearly shews how sanguine our author is, as to the article of evidence, that he can make such an inference from the first of these passages. It may, indeed, be inferred from it, that in the opinion of Philo, the Word of God might be called an *angel*, from his being employed as a *messenger* : And this is believed by all true Christians. But will any man, but one determined to force proof where he cannot find it, thence conclude, that according to Philo, every angel might be called the Word of God ? When that ancient writer calls angels *logoi*, it is evident that he does so, merely in an occasional way. He indulges himself in a commutation of the names. He calls the Logos an *angel*, not as if he imagined that he was a creature, for he often asserts the contrary ; but because the Logos acted in the relation of an *angel* or *messenger* to him who is unbegotten. In like manner, he calls the angels *logoi*, not as apprehending that they were eternal and uncreated, like the Logos ; but, as would seem, from their being occasionally his attendants in his important embassies, and being sometimes employed in the same work, though in an inferior character. Accordingly it is evident, that in the passage quoted, Philo refers to the circumstance of angels being in company with the Logos, when he appeared to Abraham at the door of his tent. For he immediately adds : “ Thence it is said “ that Abraham *went forth to bring them on their way* †.” In another place he teaches that God who spake to Abraham, on this occasion, was the Word ‡. He gives no hint that angels were commonly known by the name of *logoi* ; but  
says,

\* Vol. ii. p. 16, 17.

† De Migratione Abraham. p. 324. D. E.

‡ Leg. Allegor. p. 77.



says, on the contrary, that those whom he called *logoi* were commonly called angels; plainly enough intimating, that he was singular in this use of the designation.

The process of our author's reasoning is very uncommon. Philo occasionally uses the term *logos*, when it does not signify a person; therefore, he considered the *logos* as an occasional person only. He occasionally calls the angels *logoi*; therefore, he viewed them also as merely occasional beings, and as "nothing more than this divine " *Logos*." But it is truly astonishing that Dr P., in order to support an absurd hypothesis, should urge the vague and singular use of one term, in direct opposition to the well known sentiments of the author, as displayed in a great variety of passages. Nothing can be more evident, than that Philo considered angels as permanent beings. Therefore he calls them *animals*. "The first division of animals," he says, "is into irrational and rational. But the rational is again divided into the mortal and immortal kinds; the mortal that of men, but the immortal that of disembodied spirits, which are employed in the air, and in heaven. These are free of sin, having an immortal and happy lot *from the beginning*, as not being connected with the body, the habitation of misery \*." Speaking of the death of Abraham, he says; "For Abraham having left the state of mortality, is joined to the people of God, enjoying immortality, being made like unto the  
" angels,

\* Η μὲν φύσις τῶν ζῶων, εἰς τε ἀλογον καὶ λογικὴν μοῖραν ἐναντίας ἀλλήλαις ἐτμήθη το πρῶτον· ἡ δὲ αὐτοῦ λογικὴ πάλιν, εἰς τε τὸ φθαρτὸν καὶ ἀθάνατον εἶδος. φθαρτὸν μὲν τὸ ἀνθρώπων, ἀφθαρτὸν δὲ τὸ ψυχῶν ἀσωμάτων, αἱ κατὰ τε αἶρα καὶ ὕραν περιπολοῦσι· κακίας δὲ ἀμετοχοὶ μὲν εἰσὶν αὐταὶ, τὸν ἀκηρατὸν καὶ εὐδαιμόνα κληρὸν ἐξ ἀρχῆς λαχέσαι, καὶ τῷ συμφορᾷ ἀνηνυτῶν οὐκ ἐνδεθῆναι χωρὶς σώματι. De Confusione Linguae. p. 270, E. F.

“ angels. For the angels are the army of God, incorpo-  
 “ real and blessed souls\*.” Does he mean that the soul  
 of Abraham was absorbed in the divine essence?

Our author further objects to the evidence of Philo, that  
 “ he was far from imagining that the Logos had any more  
 “ relation to the Messiah, than to any other prophet †.”  
 But perhaps Dr P. has not observed that Philo calls him  
*the Man of God*, saying, “ How can it be that ye should  
 “ not hate war and love peace, who acknowledge one and the  
 “ same Father, not mortal but immortal, even the Man of  
 “ God; who, because he is the Word of him who is eter-  
 “ nal, is also necessarily immortal ‡.” When he after-  
 wards calls him “ the first-begotten and most sacred Word,”  
 he evidently speaks of him with respect to his incarnation  
 and character as Messiah. For he declares that he is “ *the*  
 “ *man* according to the image” of God, and “ the Seer  
 “ of Israel.” The whole passage deserves our attention.  
 “ If any one be not worthy to be called the son of God;  
 “ strive to be conformed to his first-begotten Word, the  
 “ most ancient Angel, existing as the Archangel of many  
 “ names. For he is called the Beginning, and the Name  
 “ of God, and the Word, and the Man according to the  
 “ image, and the Seer of Israel. Therefore, I have, a  
 “ little above, praised the principles of those who say, *We*  
 “ *are all the sons of one man*. For if we are not yet be-  
 “ come

\* Δε γὰρ Ἀβραὰμ ἐκλιπὼν τὰ θνητὰ, προστίθεται τῷ Θεῷ λαῶ, καρ-  
 πύμενος ἀφθαρσίαν, ἴσος ἀγγέλοις γεγὼνως· ἀγγελοὶ γὰρ στρατός εἰσι Θεῷ,  
 ἀσώματοι καὶ εὐδαιμόνες ψυχαί. De Sacrificiis Abelis et Caini, p. 101,  
 102.

† Vol. ii. p. 17.

‡ Ἐπεὶ καὶ πῶς οὐκ ἐμελλέτε φησαίμ' αὐ, ὡ γένναιοι, πολέμῳ μὲν  
 δυσχεραίνειν, εἰρηπὴν δὲ ἀγαπᾶν, ἐνᾷ καὶ τὸν αὐτὸν ἐπιγεγραμμένοι πά-  
 ῖτρα ὁ θνητὸν, ἀλλ' ἀθανάτον, ἀνθρώπον Θεῷ, ὅς τε αἰδὶς λόγος αὐ, ἐξ  
 ἀνάγκης καὶ αὐτὸς εἶναι ἀφθάρτος. De Confus. p. 255. C.



“ come fit to be called ‘the’ sons of God, let us be so at  
 “ least of his eternal Image, the most sacred Word. For  
 “ the Image of God is that most ancient Word. And in-  
 “ deed, in many places of the law, the hearers of this Seer  
 “ are also called *Sons of Israel*, for as much as hearing is  
 “ accounted inferior to seeing, and he who is taught always  
 “ holds the second place in relation to him who perceives  
 “ the exact forms of subjects without any previous instruc-  
 “ tion \*.” No one can doubt that he speaks of a real  
 person. There is as little reason to deny that he ascribes  
 divine characters to him, and yet declares him to be a mes-  
 senger. He calls him an *Angel*, and yet *the Name of God* ;  
 a *Man*, and yet *the Beginning*, the *eternal Image*. He evi-  
 dently views him as the perpetual *Prophet* of the Church,  
 and the true *Israel*. He also applies these words to the  
 Logos ; *Behold, the man whose name is the Branch*, Zech.  
 vi. 12. rendering them, according to the Septuagint, *whose*  
*name is Ανατολη*, the *Rising Sun*. Justin uses the term  
 in the same sense. I need not say that he understands it  
 of Christ †.

We

\* Καν μηδεπω μεντοι τυγχανη τις αξιοχρεως ων υιος θες προσαγο-  
 ρευεσθαι, σπυδαζε κοσμεισθαι κατα τον πρωτογονον αυτη λογον, τον  
 αγγελον πρεσβυταλον, ως αρχαγγελον πολυωνυμον υπαρχοντα. Και  
 γαρ αρχη, και ονομα, θες, και λογος, και ο καλ' εικονα ανθρωπος, δε  
 ορων Ισραηλ προσαγορευεται • διο προηχθην ολιγω προτερον επαινισαι  
 τας αρχας των φασκοντων οτι παντες εσμεν υιοι ενος ανθρωπου. Και  
 γαρ ει μηπω ικανοι θες παιδες νομιζεσθαι γεγοναμεν, αλλα τοι της αιδια  
 εικονος αυτη λογη τε ιερωταία. Θεις γαρ εικων, λογος ο πρεσβυτατος.  
 Και πολλαχου μιντοι της νομοθεσιας υιοι παλιν Ισραηλ καλονται τε ο-  
 ρωντος οι ακουοντες, επειδη μεθ' ορασιν ακοη δευτερειοις τετιμηται, και το  
 διδασκομενον τε χωρις υφηγησεως εναργεις τυποις των υτοκειμενων λαμ-  
 βανοντες αιει δευτερον. De Confus. Ling. p. 267.

† Dial. p. 327. 334.

We cannot understand the following words, without supposing that Philo believed that the Logos would be incarnate. “ There are, as appears to me, two temples of  
 “ God ; the one, indeed, is this world, in which the High-  
 “ priest is his first-begotten divine Word. But the other  
 “ is the rational soul, of which he is Priest, who is true  
 “ man, of whom the sensible image is he, who, according  
 “ to the customs of our fathers, offers up prayers and sacri-  
 “ fices \*.” Here he undoubtedly views the Jewish high-priest as merely a type of the Logos in this character.

I have not observed, that Philo any where uses the word *Messiah* or *Christ*. The nearest approach that he seems to make to this mode of expression, is when applying to the Logos, considered in his sacerdotal character, what is enjoined with respect to the manslayer continuing in the city of refuge till the death of the high-priest. On this occasion, he says, that “ his head is anointed with oil†.” But did not Philo, as well as all the rest of his nation, expect a Messiah? Is it not natural to suppose, that this most interesting subject would often engross so contemplative a mind? Does Philo so often find the *Logos* in the Old Testament ; and could he discern no vestige of the *Messiah*? The difficulty cannot be otherwise solved, than by supposing that he meant to describe the Messiah under that very name which was so familiar to him. His ideas seem to have been far more spiritual than those of the rest of his nation who did not believe in Jesus. Therefore, he might think it improper expressly to call the Logos *Messiah* ; as he

\* Δυο γαρ, ως εοικεν, ιερα θεω, εν μεν οδε ο κοσμος, εν ω και αρχιερευς ο πρωτογονος αυτου θειος λογος ετερον δε λογικη ψυχη, ης ιερευς ο προς αληθειαν ανθρωπος, ου μιμημα αισθητον ο τας παλρινης ευχας τε και θυσιας επιτελων εστιν. De Somniis, p. 463. F.

† Και διοτι τη κεφαλην κεχρισται ελαιω. De Profugis, p. 364.



he considered him especially in a spiritual light, and knew the deep-rooted prejudices of his countrymen in favour of a temporal monarchy. Besides, the term *Logos* was far more suitable to the bent of his genius. It afforded him a much more ample field for abstract speculation and refined allegory than the other.

But although he does not mention the name, we find him ascribing all the scriptural characters of Messiah to the *Logos*. For he describes him as an Angel or Messenger, as a Seer or Prophet, as the true High-priest who makes atonement, as the Mediator between God and man, as the Governor of the world, as the true Manna, as divine and yet true man, &c. Therefore, he must either have believed, that he, who was known to the ancient church as the *Logos*, should at length appear as Messiah; or that the *Logos* should cease to exercise any concern with respect to the church, and devolve all his work on the Messiah. We cannot suppose the latter, because of the divine and unchangeable attributes which he ascribes to the *Logos*. We are, therefore, under a necessity of supposing, that he considered the *Logos* as the same person who should appear as the son of David. While he not only ascribes to him the necessary characters of the promised Messiah, as including deity, but connects these with manhood; it is not conceivable, that he had not some ideas of the future incarnation of the eternal Word.

I shall only add, that, as Philo calls the *Logos* *Ανατολη*, *the rising Sun*, applying the prophecy of Zechariah to him, chap. vi. 12. the manner in which the passage has been uniformly explained by his countrymen, affords a strong collateral proof, that by the *Logos* he meant the Messiah. Many Jewish writers, who have persisted in infidelity, have expressly applied this language to the latter \*. Jonathan Ben

\* *Mirini Pugio Fidei*, p. 125. 308. 376. 594.

Ben Uzziel, who, if not cotemporary with Philo, was nearly so, interprets it in the same manner: "Behold, the man whose name is Messiah," &c. Nay, it would appear, that it was generally expected by the Jews, that the Messiah would be manifested under that very name which Philo gives to the Logos. For it is adopted by Zacharias, in his song of praise: *Through the tender mercy of our God, —the day-spring from on high hath visited us*, Luke i. 78 \*. The same word is used by the Evangelist, as by Philo.

## C H A P. V.

*Of the Sense in which the Chaldee Paraphrasts used the term Memra.*

OUR author says in his former work; "We find that the Chaldee Paraphrasts of the Old Testament often render *the Word of God*, as if it was a being distinct from God, or some angel who bore the name of God, and acted by deputation from him. So, however, it has been interpreted, though with them it might be no more than an idiom of speech †." Here Dr P. speaks only in the language of probability. But in his second work matters are ripened into certainty. "With respect to the Jews, it is evident, that in general, they did not use the term *Logos* in the Platonic sense, but as synonymous to *God*, or the mere token, or symbol, of the divine presence. The Chaldee paraphrasts often use the word מַמְרָא, *mimra*, which may be translated *Logos* or *Word*. But that, in the ideas of these writers, the word

" of

\* Vid. Glassii Rhetor. Sac. p. 178. Wolfii Cur. in loc.

† Hist. Corrupt. Vol. i.



“ of a person was merely synonymous to *himself*, is evident from their application of the same phraseology to man \*.”

It was urged by many of those who preceded Dr P. in the same system, that the term *memra* simply signified *speech*. The vanity of this pretence has been so clearly demonstrated †, that he seems to leave it to its fate, and confines himself merely to the objection already mentioned.

Some worthy men have undoubtedly gone too far, in asserting that this expression, when used by the Paraphrasts, is *always* to be understood of the personal Word. It would seem to be sometimes used, as simply denoting the mind, either of God or of man. The ancient Jews, finding that their scriptures afforded undoubted evidence of a plurality of persons existing in an unity of essence, and that action, speech, coming and walking, are ascribed to the Word of Jehovah, would naturally conclude that this name denoted a person. Observing also, that one divine person speaks to another as begotten of him ; and connecting the character of *begotten* with the Word, they would naturally enquire, what might be the reason of this designation. It would occur to them, that, as the inward word is produced by the mind of man, and yet remains in it, the Son is so denominated, because he is begotten by the Father, and is essentially in him ; and that, as words, when uttered, are the images and expressions of those ideas which the mind at first forms within itself, he also receives this name, not only because he is the express image of the Father, but because all the purposes of the Father are both declared by him, and outwardly accomplished, as in the creation of the world,

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the

\* Earl. Opin. vol. ii. p. 19, 20.

† See Fleming's Christology, vol. i. p. 138. Bedford's Sermons, p. 290, &c.

the covenant made with their fathers, &c. It being thus necessary to suppose, that all the counsels of the Father were laid in him, which they might also learn from the personality ascribed to *Wisdom*, they would conceive that he was called the Word and Wisdom of the Father, to represent their perfect unity of essence, design and operation.

That they actually formed this opinion, is evident, especially from the language of Philo. Therefore, he describes the Logos from the resemblance of an Architect, forming an idea of a building in his mind, before constructing it. Then, to express the unity of the divine essence and counsels, he adds; “As the preconceived plan of the building  
“in the mind of the architect has no existence externally,  
“but is stamped upon the mind of the artist; in like manner, this world of ideas has no place but the divine Logos,  
“who disposes all things\*.” This agrees with the account that our Lord gives of himself; *No one knoweth the Father, but the Son.*

Thus conceiving of all the counsels of the Father as formed in and with his Word, is it strange that they should at times recur to the very idea that gave birth to this interpretation,—that of the inward operation of the mind, before outward action or expression? Their personifying the *Memra*, in general, when applied to God, laid them under no necessity of doing so, at least in a proper sense, when they used this expression with respect to man. As little did the simple application of it to man restrict them as to the sense in which they were to apply it to God. For, in all languages, the same words are used in various senses. Socinians have, of all men, least reason to plead this invariable unity of language, as they affirm that those words which are most sacred among all nations, the very names of  
God,

\* De Mundi Opific. Earl. Opin. vol. ii. p. 4.



God, are often applied, without any exception, and without any marks of diſtinction, to mere creatures. Therefore, by a parity of reaſon, it might be urged that, becauſe the name JEHOVAH is, according to their theory, ſometimes given to a created angel, we are never to underſtand it in any other ſenſe. Nay, with reſpect to the very word *Logos*, might it not with equal juſtneſs be aſſerted, that becauſe it ſometimes ſignifies ſpeech, it ought invariably to be underſtood in this ſenſe? Indeed, it would not only be doing the ſame juſtice to the Goſpel of John, that is done by Socinians to the Paraphraſes, but perhaps as near the real ſenſe as their own interpretation, were a new theorist to plead that, becauſe *logos* in Scripture often ſignifies *ſpeech*, we were bound to interpret the introduction to that Goſpel in this ſenſe; “In the beginning was *ſpeech*,” &c.

It has been obſerved, that the Paraphraſts deſcribe the Word in language analogous to that of the Apoſtle John, when he ſays that *the Word was with God*. For they ſpeak of him as “the Word from before the Lord, or which is “before the Lord.” Thus Onkelos paraphraſes, Gen. xxxi. 22. “And the Word from before the Lord came to Laban:” and Exod. xx. 19. “Let not the Word from before the Lord ſpeak with us, leſt we die\*.” This mode of expreſſion affords the moſt unqueſtionable evidence of a perſonal diſtinction. Maimonides himſelf, anxious as he was to obſcure all thoſe paſſages of Scripture that imply a divine plurality, and to conceal every evidence of the Jews having ever held this doctrine, durſt not venture ſo far as Dr P. He had not boldneſs enough to aſſert that, with the Chaldee interpreters, the *Word of God* was merely “ſynonymous to *God*” himſelf. He knew that the Targums afforded ſuch unqueſtionable evidence of the introduction

\* Gill on John i. 1.

duction of a distinct person under this designation, that every one of his countrymen, who was in the least acquainted with them, would give him the lie. Therefore, he finds himself reduced to the miserable shift of pretending that, when the Paraphrasts speak of the Word of the Lord, and use this expression where the name of God occurs in the original, they mean to describe a created angel\*.

This objection, however, is by no means new. It has been hackneyed by writers of the same persuasion for more than a century†. All that it proves, is what we do not wish to deny, that the term *memra* does not always denote the personal Word.

But this objection makes its appearance with a very bad grace, after the Doctor has been obliged to confess that Philo, a writer of the same nation, of the same principles, and nearly of the same age, gives a real, although, as is pretended, only an occasional personality to the *Logos*. While this is granted with respect to Philo, who can believe that not one of the Paraphrasts, on any occasion, uses a synonymous term in the same sense? What would be thought of any writer in a succeeding age, who should assert that, although Mr Lindsey denied personality to the Holy Spirit, Dr Priestley, a member of the same unitarian church, was always to be understood in a sense directly opposite; because in some instances he had spoken of the Spirit in language that might imply personal agency? Undoubtedly, any man of sense would say; “It is unnatural to suppose, that there should have been any diversity of opinion between these gentlemen on this point; the doctrine of one  
“ person

\* *Et fuit Verbum Domini ad me, &c.* Fieri quoque potest, meo iudicio ut Onkelos per vocem *Elohim*, Angelum intellexerit, &c. More Nevochim, par. i. c. 27. p. 33.

† Vid. Deyling. *Obser. Sac.* P. i, Obs. 49.



“ perſon in deity being the very baſis of their ſyſtem.  
 “ But let us try, if there be not other expreſſions in the  
 “ Doctör’s works, which ſhew that he entertained ſuch i-  
 “ deas of the Spirit as were totally incompatible with per-  
 “ ſonality.” Let the queſtion before us be brought to the  
 ſame iſſue. If it ſhall appear that the Targumiſts aſſerted  
 ſuch things concerning *the Word of the Lord*, as cannot be  
 applied to God the Father, and as, at the ſame time, imply  
 real perſonality and divine perfection; it muſt neceſſarily  
 follow that, on theſe occaſions, at leaſt, they ſpoke of a per-  
 ſon, in the divine eſſence, diſtinct from the Father.

They find the Word in the very firſt appearance of God  
 after the fall. That expreſſion, *They heard the voice of the  
 Lord God walking in the garden*, Gen. iii. 8. is rendered,  
 “ They heard the *Word*, &c.” All the Targums agree in  
 this view of the paſſage: and that of Jeruſalem begins the  
 next verſe in this manner; “ And the Word of the Lord  
 “ God called unto Adam.” Another expreſſes the mean-  
 ing of the verſe ſtill more copiouſly; “ They heard the  
 “ voice of the Word of the Lord God walking.” It ſeems  
 moſt natural, indeed, to underſtand this language of a per-  
 ſon. For even the modern Jews cannot deny, that the par-  
 ticipple, *walking*, immediately refers to *the voice*, and not to  
*the Lord God* \*. *Walking* is undoubtedly the attribute of a  
 perſon, and not of a mere *voice*: The author of *Tzeror  
 Hammor* makes this obſervation on the place: “ Before  
 “ they ſinned, they ſaw the Glory of the bleſſed God ſpeak-  
 “ ing with *him*,” that is, with God; “ but after their ſin,  
 “ they only heard the Voice walking †.” This writer un-  
 doubtedly underſtood the *Voice* as a diſtinct perſon, the  
 D 3 ſame

\* Vox enim eſt res illa, de qua dicitur, quod ambulaverit in horto.  
 Maimon. More Nevochim, Par. i. c. 24.

† Sect. Bere ſhith. ap. Owen Hebr. vi. i. Exerc. x.

same whom he before calls the *Glory*. And the latter is one of the personal characters of the Messiah, Isa. xl. 5. lx. 1.

The *Memra* is evidently described as one *sent*. The words of Elijah, 1 Kings xviii. 24. *I will call on the name of the Lord*, &c. are thus paraphrased by Jonathan; “I will pray in the Name of the Lord, and he shall send his Word.” The Paraphrast could not refer to any message from God. For it was not an answer by word, but by fire, that Elijah expected. It has never been pretended, either by Socinians, or by the orthodox, that God the Father is said to be sent. If there be but one Divine Person, by whom is he sent?

We learn from Gen. xvi. 7. &c. that *the Angel of the Lord found Hagar by a fountain of water*; that he said, *I will multiply thy seed exceedingly*, and that *she called the Name of JEHOVAH that spake to her, Thou God seest me*. It is evident, that Hagar considered the person who addressed her as divine. Philo asserts that it was the Word who appeared to her \*. Jonathan gives the same view; “She confessed before the Lord JEHOVAH, whose Word had spoken to her.” With this the Jerusalem Targum agrees: “She confessed and prayed to the Word of the Lord, who had appeared to her.” It is vain to say, in the Socinian sense, that God himself is here meant. For the Paraphrasts must have known from the text, that the person spoken of is called an Angel. If the Father be meant, how is he called an Angel? We may be told, indeed, that a mere angel often assumes the name, and claims the attributes of JEHOVAH. But it is not credible that the ancient Jews, who were so superstitiously tender of the name JEHOVAH, that they would neither pronounce nor write it, lest they should take it in vain, would ever think of conferring it, or imagine

\* Καταγεται υπαιτησαντος αγγελου, ος εστι θειος λογος, εις τον δισποτικον οικον. De Cherubim, p. 83. C.



gine that it was conferred by God, on a created angel. When, therefore, they call this angel *the Word*, it argues a conviction, that he was both distinct from the Father, and equal to him. According to the text, he who addressed Hagar was JEHOVAH, who could multiply her seed ; and yet an Angel. According to the paraphrases, this Angel was the Word, who was at the same time the object of prayer. Before Dr P. can shew that a personal Word is not here meant, he must prove, first, that God, essentially considered, may be an Angel or one sent ; and secondly, that this was the opinion of the Chaldee Paraphrasts. As according to the doctrine ascribed to Philo, this was certainly one of these *occasions* on which the Logos was a person, the Doctor would also need to give his reader a satisfying reason why he must understand the Paraphrasts, writing on the same subject, and using the same mode of expression, in so very different a sense.

They describe the Word as a *Mediator*. It is said, Deut. iv. 7. *For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for?* Jonathan gives the following paraphrase of the passage ; “ God is near in the name of the “ Word of the Lord.” Again, we find this paraphrase on Hos. iv. 9. “ God will receive the prayer of Israel by his “ Word, and have mercy upon them, and will make them “ by his Word like a beautiful fig-tree.” And on Jer. xxix. 14. “ I will be sought by you in my Word, and I “ will be enquired of through you by my Word \*.” According to the Jerusalem Targum on Gen. xxi. 33. Abraham, at Beer-sheba, “ prayed in the name of the Word “ of the Lord, the God of the world †.” But it is inconceivable, that the Paraphrasts did not here mean to describe

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\* See Bedford's Serm. p. 252. 269.

† Ibid. p. 268.

the Word as a Mediator ; especially as we know that the ancient Jews, when supplicating God, intreated that he would “ look on the face of his Anointed ;” and have also seen that Philo, nearly cotemporary with some of the Paraphrasts, expressly declared his faith in the Word, as the Mediator between God and man.

They speak of *atonement* as made by this *Memra*. On Deut xxxii. 43. Jonathan observes ; “ God will atone by  
 “ his Word for his land, and for his people, even a people  
 “ saved by the Word of the Lord.” This exactly corresponds with what we have extracted from Philo, concerning the Word as an High-priest.

They describe the *Memra* as a *Redeemer*, and sometimes as the *Messiah*. These words, Gen. xlix. 18. *I have waited for thy salvation*, are thus paraphrased in the Jerusalem Targum ; “ Our father Jacob said thus ; My soul expects  
 “ not the redemption of Gideon the son of Joash, which is  
 “ a temporal salvation ; nor the redemption of Samson,  
 “ which is a transitory salvation ; but the redemption which  
 “ thou didst promise should come through thy *Memra* to thy  
 “ people. This salvation my soul waits for.” In the blessing of Judah, v. 10.—12. particular mention is made of the King Messiah. It is a striking proof that by the *Memra* they meant him who was to appear as the Messiah, that in the Targum of Jonathan, v. 18. is thus rendered ; “ Our Father Jacob said, I do not expect the deliverance of Gideon the son of Joash, which is a temporal salvation ; nor  
 “ that of Samson the son of Manoah, which is a transient  
 “ salvation. But I expect the redemption of the *Messiah*  
 “ the Son of David, who shall come to gather to himself  
 “ the children of Israel.” It is evident that the one paraphrast has copied from the other : and as the one puts *Messiah* for *Memra*, it cannot well be denied that they had considered both terms as denoting the same person.



We have a remarkable promise, Lev. xxvi. 12. *I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye ſhall be my people.* The paſſage, viewed in its connection, ſeems evidently to refer to the great gift of the Meſſiah. God promiſes, ver. 8. *I will eſtabliſh my covenant with you.* Even ſome of the later Jews underſtand this of the new covenant, which God was to make with Iſrael and Judah, foretold by Jeremiah, chap. xxxi. 31. Rabbi Solomon, and the author of *Pefikta*, are mentioned as of this opinion\*. God alſo declares, ver. 11. *I will ſet my tabernacle amongſt you.* He had already done ſo, as to the letter. But this promiſe evidently has a farther reference. Thence, the ſtriking coincidence between it and the words of the Evangeliſt, has been remarked by interpreters. John ſays, *The Word was made fleſh, and εσκηνωσεν εν ημιν, tabernacled among us,* chap. i. 14. This is the eſſence of the promiſe; and the very expreſſion is remarkably conſonant to that of the Septuagint, in the paſſage under conſideration, Θησω την σκηνην μου εν υμιν.

There is every reaſon to think, that the ancient Jews diſcerned the Meſſiah here. Jonathan gives the following paraphraſe of ver. 12. “I will be your God, and my Word ſhall be unto you God the Redeemer.” That expreſſion, ver. 9. *I will have reſpect unto you,* is rendered by Onkelos; “I will look upon you in my Word:” and that in ver. 11. *My ſoul ſhall not abhor you,* he thus gloſſes; “My Word ſhall not abhor you.” The *Memra* is introduced here, without any verbal reference to it in the original, no leſs than thrice in the courſe of four verſes. This certainly argues a ſtrong conviction in the mind of the Paraphraſt, that the paſſage referred to the promiſed Deliverer. Socinians themſelves will grant, in words at leaſt, that it is only in Jeſus Chriſt that God looks on ſinful men with complacency.

\* Kidder’s Demonſtr. par. 3. p. 107.

cency. The Word of God gave the most astonishing proof that he did not abhor his people, when he *tabernacled among* them.

They describe this *Memra* as *only-begotten*, and in this character as the *Creator*. That remarkable verse, Gen. iii. 22. *The Lord God said, Behold the man is become as one of us*, is paraphrased in a very singular manner: “The Word of the Lord said, Behold, Adam whom *I have created*, is the only-begotten in the world, as I am the *only-begotten* in the highest heavens \*.” The language here ascribed to the *Memra*, with what reference to the text avails not in the present inquiry, is applicable to a person only; and it will not be pretended by our opponents that it can apply to the *Father*. The person intended was believed to be “the only-begotten Word.” How nearly does this language approach to that of inspiration! *In the beginning was the Word.—All things were made by him.—We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father*, John i. 1. 3. 14.—The word above rendered, *I have created*, is understood in the second person by Glassius †. For he reads it, *creasti*. But it makes no material difference. For in which way soever the expression be rendered, it clearly proves the Paraphrast’s belief of the distinction of the Word from the Father.

It is not denied that Philo often applies this character of *only-begotten* to the Logos.

If, therefore, the Paraphrasts describe the *Memra* as one sent, as a Mediator, as one by whom atonement is made, as a Redeemer and the Messiah, and as only-begotten; it is undeniable that they do not mean God the Father. If, notwithstanding, they ascribe personal and divine characters to the Word, which Dr P. cannot deny, they must mean a distinct person in the divine essence.

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\* Targ. Hierosol. ap. Pfeifferi Theol. Judaic. p. 386.

† Philol. Sacr. lib. i. p. 24.



Many other paſſages, to the ſame purpoſe, might have been quoted from the Targums. But theſe, we apprehend, are ſufficient to ſatisfy any who are not determined to ſhut their eyes againſt evidence.

Mahomet, to whom the Socinians have pleaded kindred \*, may ſurely be ſuſtained as an impartial witneſs. It was not his object to exalt Jeſus Chriſt. Yet he was ſo fully convinced, from the writings of the Old Teſtament, and from the general doctrine of the ancient Jews, that this character belonged to him, that he calls him *the Word of God* †.

Before leaving this part of our ſubject, we may attend to what Dr P. has objected to the evidence, that the Paraphraſts reckoned the Memra and the Meſſiah the ſame perſon. He founds his objection on the words of Jonathan, who ſays, that “ the Meſſiah and Moſes will appear at the  
“ end of the world, the one in the deſart, and the other at  
“ Rome, and that the Word, or Logos, will march between  
“ them ‡.” Francis Taylor, the firſt who ſeems to have objected this as a proof that they did not intend one perſon by theſe two names, gives an anſwer to his own objection. For he adds ; “ It is probable, that, as the Jews acknowledge a  
“ twofold Meſſiah, they might intend to point out the  
“ humble and afflicted one by the name *Meſſiah*, and the o-  
“ ther, whom they expect as a triumphant conqueror, by  
“ that of *Memra* ||.” But theſe words might be meant merely to ſignify that, as the diſpenſation of the Law was under the adminiſtration of the *Memra*, that of the latter  
day

\* See their Epiſtle to Ameth ben Ameth, prefixed to Leſſlie's Socin. Controverſy.

† Glaſſii Phil. l. 1. t. 4. f. 3. p. 340.

‡ Vol. iii. p. 46.

|| Apud Pfeifferi Crit. Sacr. cap. 8. qu. 18.

day should be so also ; or, that he should be the centre of union between the Law and the Gospel. Thus, it may be viewed as similar to that of Philo concerning the same illustrious person. When he says that he is “the middle between two extremes,” God and man, he does not mean to deny his Deity, but to assert his mediatory character. He represents him as uniting both. I cannot think that the *Memra* is here meant as a distinct person. For although Moses is supposed to ride on one cloud, and the Messiah on another, this is not asserted of the *Memra*. According to Basnage, to whom Dr P. refers, the *Memra* is said to *walk* or *march*. But Basnage himself refers to Pfeiffer, who quotes the Targumist as simply saying, “And the *Memra* between both \*.”

But as this seems to be the only passage of the kind that can be produced, in what way soever it be explained, it is not of sufficient weight in opposition to a multitude to the contrary. Instead of arguing from a single passage in which the writer seems to discover some confusion, on a subject which he could not understand, while a stranger to the accomplishment of the great promise ; we may rather wonder that, in other places, he expresses himself so clearly. For we have seen that this very writer accounted the redemption of the Messiah the same with that of the *Memra*.

With respect to the objection, I shall only add, that although we were certain that the Paraphrast meant that the *Memra* and Messiah were different persons, it would be unfair to judge, by this circumstance, of the meaning of all the other Chaldee interpreters. For it seems evident that the Paraphrase on the five books of Moses, ascribed to Jonathan Ben Uzziel, was not written for several centuries after

\* In fine mundi Moses e medio deserti exhibit, et rex Messias e medio Romæ, alter in nubis unius, alter in alterius culmine equitabit, et verbum Domini inter utrumque. Ibid.



ter his time. For it mentions Conſtantinople and Lombardy \*. Now, it is well known that the later Jews in general, in their notions concerning the Meſſiah, have deviated much farther from the faith of Chriſtians, than their predeceſſors. It has been already ſeen, that the Paraphraſts interpret what is ſaid of the *Angel of the Lord* who addreſſed Hagar, of the Word. But this is not a ſolitary inſtance. For they give the ſame account of the Angel who deſtroyed Sodom, of the Angel who went before the Iſraelites in the cloudy pillar, and of him who deſtroyed the Aſſyrians †. While Philo deſcribes the Word as an Angel, they declare *the Angel of the Lord* to be the Word. Thus, it undoubtedly appears that both Philo and the Paraphraſts mean the ſame perſon.

It is well known that many read the words of Eve, on occaſion of the birth of Cain, *I have obtained the man the Lord*, Gen. iv. 1. apprehending that ſhe conſidered this event as the accompliſhment of the promiſe concerning *the ſeed of the woman*. But whatever was the meaning of our common parent, it deſerves our particular attention, that the Paraphraſt renders the whole verſe in the following manner: “And Adam knew his wife Eve, who deſired “ *the Angel*; and ſhe conceived and bare Cain, and ſaid I “ have obtained a man,” or, “ the man, *the Angel of the “ Lord*.” As *Jehovah* is the word uſed in the original, we cannot conceive that the interpreter ſhould have given this paraphraſe, had he not known that it was believed by his countrymen, that he who was revealed in ſcripture as the Angel of the Lord was *Jehovah*, or the true God, and alſo that he was to be incarnate as *the Angel of the covenant*, or Meſſiah.

That by the Word the Paraphraſts underſtood the Meſſiah, is evident from their interpretation of theſe words,  
Pſal.

\* Prideaux's Connect. Part 2. b. 8. p. 418.

Pfal. cx. 1. *The Lord ſaid unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, &c.* Jonathan renders them, “The Lord ſaid unto his Word.” Nothing can be more clear, than that the Jews in general, during our Saviour’s miniſtry, underſtood this paſſage of the Meſſiah. Not one of the Pharifees, however much *puzzled*, as our author expreſſes it, objected to this as the true meaning, Math. xxii. 41.—46. It is therefore contrary to all the rules of interpretation, to ſuppoſe that Jonathan underſtood the language in a different ſenſe. It may indeed ſuit a Socinian intellect, to conſider it as the meaning of the Paraphraſt, that *Jehovah* ſpoke to himſelf; that he deſired himſelf to ſit at his own right hand; that he engaged to himſelf, to make his enemies his footſtool; that he ſware to himſelf, that he ſhould be a prieſt for ever, &c. For it is natural for thoſe, who are themſelves under the empire of folly, to endeavour as far as poſſible to aſſimilate every other to themſelves. All this abſurdity muſt follow; if, according to the Socinian hypotheſis, by *the Word* the Paraphraſts ſimply mean *God himſelf*, that is, the Father, as the only perſon in Deity.

## C H A P. VI.

*The Doctrines of the Jews concerning the name JEHOVAH,  
the Angel METATRON, and the TRINITY.*

“THE Jewish Cabbaliſts,” our author obſerves, “might eaſily admit that the Meſſiah might be called *Jehovah*, without ſuppoſing that he was any thing more than a man, who had no exiſtence before his birth. That it muſt have been the mere *name* and not the *nature* of God; that the Jews ſuppoſed their Meſſiah to partake of, is all  
I “ that



“ that can be admitted in the case. Several things in the  
 “ Scriptures are called by the name of Jehovah ; as Jeru-  
 “ salem,—is called *Jehovah our righteousness* ; but this ne-  
 “ ver led the Jews to suppose that there were two Jeho-  
 “ vahs, a greater and a less \*.” It is so far good that the  
 Doctor *admits*, that the Jews ascribed the name of God to  
 the Messiah. We should not have had such a concession,  
 had he not found that there was no evasion. He afterwards  
 mentions a Jewish writer, “ who laughs at the pretensions  
 “ of Christians to bring proofs of the Trinity from the cab-  
 “ bala †.” But even the less ancient Jews would have  
 laughed at the Doctor’s pretending that they would give the  
 name *Jehovah* to a mere man. Maimonides speaks the sen-  
 timents of the whole nation when he says ; “ The Name of  
 “ four letters has no known etymology ; nor is it communi-  
 “ cated to another. And there is no doubt that the glori-  
 “ ous name, which, as you know, it is not lawful to utter,  
 “ unless in the sanctuary, and by the holy priests alone in  
 “ their benediction, as also by the high priests on the day of  
 “ atonement ; that, I say, it respects something in which  
 “ there is no communication between God and man ‡.”  
 Kimchi, explaining these words, Isa. xlii. 8. *Jehovah, that*  
*is my name*, paraphrases them in this manner ; “ That name  
 “ is proper to me.” Thence the Jews are wont to call it  
 the

\* Vol. iii. p. 44.

† Ibid, p. 47.

‡ Sed illum Nomen, cujus literæ sunt, *Iod He Vau He*, non habet etymologiam notam, neque communicatur alteri. Ac nullum est dubium, quin gloriosum istud Nomen, quod, ut nosti, non proferre licet, nisi in Sanctuario, et a sacerdotibus Dei sanctis solum in benedictione sacerdotum, ut et a sacerdote magno in die jejunii, quin, inquam, doceat de re aliqua, in qua inter Deum et alia, nulla prorsus est communicatio, &c. More Nevochim, Pars i. cap. 61.

*the proper name of God.* The same writer, on Hof. xii. 5. *Jehovah his memorial*, observes; “ In the name *El*, and *Elohim*, he communicates with others; but in this name he “ does not communicate with any one.” Aben Ezra, on Ex. iii. 14. is at great pains to shew that this name is proper to God \*.

But whatever were the opinion of the Jews, did it oppose the testimony of God, it could be of no more weight in the argument, than their rejection of him whom the Father hath sent. God expressly testifies, in many places, that this name is his peculiar: and shall we refuse to believe him? He made himself known to his people by the name *Jehovah*, to express his nature, and to distinguish him from all whom he called gods, or who were so called by others. When, therefore, this name was, in composition, imposed on a place, there could be no danger of its being mistaken by them for God, or being supposed to possess divine nature; and thus, no danger of the original design of this distinctive name being defeated. But as the idolatry of the world in general consisted in deifying intelligent creatures, had he permitted this name to be given to any such, he would have defeated his own design in the use of it, and would himself have signally contributed to idolatry †. When God claims this name to himself, it is directly in opposition to every other nature, to which the folly of mankind might ascribe divinity. *My glory will I not give to another*, Isa. xlii. 8. This name could not be conferred on a person of an inferior nature, without robbing God of his glory, or transferring some share of it to the creature thus denominated.

\* Vid. Hoornbeck Socin. Confut. tom. ii. p. 97.

† Guffetii Veritas Salutifera, P. I. c. 42. p. 312.



denominated. Whether angel or man, being a subject capable of intellectual and moral perfection, he would be supposed to possess some peculiar excellency, entitling him to the divine name : and when it was found that this was conferred by God himself, it would be scarcely possible to withhold divine honour, or to believe that it could be disagreeable to him who had conferred it. But when it was used in composition, in the names of places, instead of having this tendency, it was solely meant to ascribe the glory to *Jehovah*, who had manifested himself there ; nay, directly tended, in the constant remembrance of his people, to appropriate it wholly to him, to the exclusion of every other.

The argument from Jerusalem being called *Jehovah our righteousness*, is of no weight. For the natural version of the words is, *And this is he who shall call her, Jehovah our Righteousness*, Jer. xxxiii. 16. The word *call*, in this place, does not refer either to the name of the Messiah, or of Jerusalem ; but to his work of calling her to a participation of New Covenant blessings. But although this name were given to Jerusalem, nothing more could be urged from this circumstance, than from the use of those compound names already considered.

Thus, when Dr P. says, “ That it must have been the “ mere *name*, and not the *nature* of God, that the Jews supposed their Messiah to partake of ;” he supposes them not only to contradict themselves, but the word of God. The Doctor adds very justly, concerning the name being given to *several things* ; “ This never led the Jews to suppose, that there “ were two Jehovahs, a greater and a less.” This is the very thing that has always pinched them in their disputes with the Christians. They know that this name cannot be properly given to another, without acknowledging him to be God. Finding that it is given to the Messiah, while they oppose the doctrine of the Trinity, they know not what to make of it.

Our author's subsequent reasoning, in reply to the texts quoted by Bishop Pearson, and what has been advanced by Mr Taylor of Portsmouth, is both trifling and unfair. "Nothing," he says, "can be more expressly declared than that there is but one Jehovah; and in the passages quoted by Bishop Pearson, there is no intimation of there being two Jehovahs; so that if the Messiah be Jehovah, there must have been no other being above him, which Mr Taylor would not suppose." No Trinitarian can suppose that there is a "Being above" the Messiah. For the Messiah is not a distinct being from God. He is only one person in the divine nature, sustaining a relation different from that which essentially belongs to him. The Father is *above* him, not in a *personal*, but only in a *fæderal* respect. His inferiority, being voluntary, cannot deprive him of his essential dignity. When the Messiah, therefore, is called *Jehovah*, it is not as another being than God, but as another person than the Father; originally possessing this name in common with him, and invested with an office which necessarily supposes this. For it is not a name peculiar to one person, but expressive of the undivided nature.

We shall now consider what the Doctor advances concerning the angel Metatron. "The most," he says, "that I should be disposed to infer from what the Jewish Cabbalists have said on the subject would be, that this Metatron was something similar to what Philo represents the *Logos* as being, namely an *efflux* of the divinity, but no *being* or *person*, permanently distinguished from him." But we have already shown, that Philo entertained no such idea. This is the most that Dr P. is "disposed to infer;" not because he has any solid grounds for such an inference, but because he is *unwilling* to make any other, as it would greatly injure his cause. But as far as



we can observe, he cannot produce a single proof; that any of the Cabbalistic writers formed the idea of occasional personality. They had very absurd ideas concerning angels: but they were of such a nature, as to exclude this species of absurdity. For some of them apprehended that they were corporeal \*. They reckoned angels of two kinds, corruptible and permanent. Those were called *corruptible*, which were supposed to be corporeal, as deriving their existence from generation. So far were they from supposing them to be *emanations* from the divine nature †. Basnage, our author's great authority in Jewish matters, contradicts him here. For, according to his account, the Cabbalists assert, that from Metatron all the angels “ derive their “ lives, and all other advantages and comforts.”

Now, it is difficult to conceive that *he* should be the source of being to persons constantly existing, and support them in it. who is himself only an occasional person. But indeed, these writers expressly declare that “ he is exalted above “ them all, *continually* beholding the face of God, and “ distributing to them *every day* bread convenient for “ them ‡.”

The Doctor justly observes, that there “ is little de- “ pendence on the whimsical and uncertain notions of these “ Jewish Cabbalists §.” But their singular ascriptions to the angel Metatron, although they should not prove that they considered him as the soul of the Messiah, clearly enough demonstrate that, to their conviction, the Scripture contained various ascriptions to an angel, which they could not with propriety interpret of a mere creature. There-  

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fore,

\* Basnage Hist. b. iv. c. 9.

† Maimonid. More Nevoch. Par. ii. c. 6.

‡ Basnage, b. iv. c. 8.

§ Vol. iii. p. 45.

fore, they said that the name of God was in this angel. Dr P., indeed, quotes Bafnage, as shewing that this “ means nothing more than that the letters of the word “ *Metatron*, and those of *Shadai*, considered as numerals, “ express the same number, viz. 314.” It was natural for the Cabbalists, according to their usual manner, to advert to this circumstance. But we must attend to their design. This was to support their doctrine of the mystery of the person. For when they found a mystery in a name, they understood it as expressive of a further, and a more important, mystery. The learned are greatly divided as to the origin of this name; some deriving it from the Hebrew, others from the Greek, and others supposing it to be a corruption of the Latin word *Metator*, or of *Mediator*. It seems most probable, that they adopted the name as corresponding, in numerals, with *Shadai*; and that this correspondence was the reason of their adopting it, that thus they might express the character of that angel of whom it is said, *My name is in him*; *Shadai* being one of the names of God. They do not seem to have inferred the doctrine from the name, but to have chosen the name to suit the doctrine. The former might be supposed, if that of God’s name being in this angel, were the only peculiar ascription. But this is far from being the case. Even according to Bafnage, it was he who, by the Jewish accounts, wrestled with Jacob. Now, these writers must have known that this angel is expressly called *God*.

In the Gemara of Babylon, these words are explained; *Whom shall he teach knowledge, and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? Them that are weaned, &c.* Isa. xxviii. 9. This work is first ascribed to God. Then it is said; “ But who taught them from the beginning?” that is, as the passage is understood, before the destruction of the temple. The answer is; “ If you please, you may say, Me-  
“ tatron;



“tatron; but if you prefer it, *he* hath done both the one  
 “and the other;” that is, God hath taught infants both  
 before and since that event\*. They also describe Meta-  
 tron as “the Angel of God’s face or presence;” and as  
 performing the functions of a Mediator. For they say,  
 that by him alone we can have access to God. They pre-  
 tend, that “when the tabernacle was erected in the wil-  
 “derness, another tabernacle was erected, *viz.* that of the  
 “child Metatron, whose name is the same with the name  
 “of his God.” In this tabernacle, he is said to “offer the  
 “souls of the just, that he may make expiation for Israel  
 “during the time of his captivity †.” When Basnage is  
 quoted, as “shewing that he is the same with the angel  
 “Michael,” Dr P. might also have mentioned that, ac-  
 cording to the acknowledgment of the same author, they  
 make a God of him ‡. The same is asserted by other  
 writers §. The Talmudists say that this Angel “hath  
 “power to blot out the sins of Israel,” whence they make  
 him “the Chancellor of heaven ||.”

From a connected view of these circumstances, it must  
 appear, that the later Jewish writers found themselves  
 under a necessity of ascribing perfections to one angel,  
 which properly belong to God only. We may also ob-  
 serve, that their elevation of this angel above all others,  
 is a proof that they did not believe that the names of Deity  
 were common even to angels. Their system concerning  
 Metatron is evidently the best they could make of those

E 3 passages

\* *Avoda Sara*, p. 13. 14.

† *Talmud*, *Chagigah*, c. 2. ap. *Lampe* in *Joh. i. 14.* *Vitringa Obs.*  
*Sac. l. i. c. 9.*

‡ *Hist. b. iv. c. 9.*

§ *Vid. Wolfii Cur. Phil. in Phil. ii. 9.*

|| *Owen on Heb. vol. i. Ex. x. p. 121.*

passages of scripture urged by Christians in proof of a plurality of persons in the Godhead; while, from their hatred of Christianity, they have generally receded as far as possible from this doctrine.

To these testimonies it may not be improper to subjoin the words of R. Moses Gerundensis Nehmanni, who wrote about the year 1220. They illustrate the sentiments of some of the Jews, even in later times, concerning that Angel to whom divine names are given, and divine operations ascribed. When explaining Josh. v. 14. where we have an account of the appearance of one as “ Captain of  
 “ the Lord’s host,” he says; “ This Angel, if we speak ex-  
 “ actly, is the Angel-Redeemer, of whom it is written,  
 “ *My Name is in him*; that very Angel who said to Jacob,  
 “ Gen. xxxi. 13. *I am the God of Bethel*; he of whom  
 “ it is said, *And God called to Moses out of the bush*, Ex.  
 “ iii. 4. He is called an Angel, because he governs the  
 “ world. For it is written, Deut. vi. 21. *The Lord brought*  
 “ *you up out of Egypt*; and Num. xx. 6. *He sent his*  
 “ *Angel, and brought you out of Egypt*. Besides it is writ-  
 “ ten, Isa. lxiii. 9: *And the Angel of his Face saved them*.  
 “ He is that Angel, viz. who is the Face of God; of  
 “ whom it is said, Ex. xxxiii. 14. *My Face shall go, and*  
 “ *I will give you rest*. In fine, he is that Angel of whom  
 “ the prophet Malachi says, ch. iii. 1. *And the Lord whom*  
 “ *ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple, even the Mes-*  
 “ *senger of the covenant whom ye delight in.*” Again, he  
 says; “ Diligently attend to the meaning of these words,  
 “ *My Face shall go before thee*. For Moses and the  
 “ Israelites always desired the chief Angel. But who  
 “ this was, they could not truly understand. For neither  
 “ did they learn it from others, nor could they sufficiently  
 “ attain it by prophecy. But the Face of God signifies  
 “ God himself; which is acknowledged by all interpreters.  
 “ But



“ But no one can have the least notion of these things, unless he be truly instructed in the mysteries of the law.” And again; “ *My Face shall go before you*, that is, the Angel of the covenant whom ye desire, in whom my Face shall be seen; of whom it is said, *In an acceptable time have I heard thee: My name is in him: And I will cause thee to rest*; or I will cause, that he shall be gentle and benign to thee. Neither shall he lead thee with rigour, but calmly and mercifully \*.”

The reason given by this writer for the name Angel, although true in itself, does not clearly express its meaning. But it contains more than one would apprehend at first sight. For when he says of the person spoken of, that “ he is called an Angel, because he governs the world;” it is evident, from the scriptures quoted in proof of this assertion, that he especially intends his government of the Jewish church, as a *Saviour*. He says that “ the Face of God signifies *God himself*.” But it is not credible, that he meant this in our author’s sense. He undoubtedly refers to the unity of essence between God and this Angel; else why would he avoid a particular explanation, leaving the doctrine as a *mystery*? If he meant the same person with God, there was no mystery, and there could be no reason for leaving the subject abruptly. But supposing him to mean a plurality in one essence, we discern a reason for his conduct, of sufficient weight with a Jew. He was afraid of affording any handle to the Christians.

But he explains himself more fully in the passage last quoted. Not having absolutely asserted the unity of God and this Angel, he seems to have been less on his guard. By applying the words of Malachi to him whom he calls *the Face of God*, it appears that he considered this person

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as

\* Vid. Poli Synops. in Josh. v. 14. Owen on the Heb. vol. i. Ex. x p. 122.

as the future Messiah. But it is undeniable, that he viewed this Angel as a distinct person in the divine essence. For although he says that he is *God himself*, he introduces God as speaking to him; nay, as speaking these words, which some of the more learned Jews understand, as respecting the Messiah; *In an acceptable time have I heard thee*, Isa. xlix. 8.

Even Maimonides, at the very time that he is attempting to shew that, when we read of God as appearing, we are to understand it as meant of a mere angel, quotes the judgment of Rabbi Chija, although he could not but be conscious that it opposed his system. He gives it every advantage, by extolling this Rabbi, as “one of their most excellent and greatest wise men.” It respects what is said of Jehovah, as appearing to Abraham, when he saw *three men*; and particularly, the solemn address of the Patriarch to one of the three, *My Lord, if now I have found grace in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant*, Gen. xviii. 3. “Rabbi Chija says, that these words of Abraham, were spoken and directed to one, and indeed to the chief one among them. This I leave to thee, as a great secret deserving thy consideration. He says the same thing of what we have in the history of Jacob; *And there wrestled a man with him*, &c\*.” Why does he roll the burden of this interpretation on Rabbi Chija? It has been common with the later Jews, when they introduced any thing favourable to the doctrine of a plurality in the Godhead, to give it on the authority of more ancient writers. Thus they skreen themselves

\* R. Chija dicit, quod verba ista Abrahami; *Domine, si nunc inveniri gratiam in oculis tuis, ne quaeso, transeas a servo tuo*; quod inquam ista verba ad unum, et quidem præcipuum inter illos, dixerit et direxerit; quod tibi tanquam secretum magnum, considerandum relinquo. Idem dixit de eo quod in historia Jacobi legimus. *Et luctatus est Vir cum ipso*, &c. More Nevochim, P. 2. cap. 42. p. 310.



themselves from the charge of heresy; even when they make those acknowledgments, which the truth forces from them. Maimonides, as would seem, mentions this view, from a conviction that the maxim generally adopted by his brethren in later times, concerning God's employing a created Angel, in the *appearances* mentioned, could not bear them out, in the explanation of a variety of passages. But he *leaves it as a great secret*, evidently wishing to conceal it from the Christians.

D. P. seems very certain, that the Jews never entertained any ideas of a Trinity. Of a great many passages in their writings, which relate to this doctrine, I shall mention only a few. Grotius himself, although, as some of that party have said, “a Socinian all over,” thought so differently from our author, concerning the Jews, that he has quoted some of their writers, as calling God three lights, and by the name of Father, Son and Holy Ghost\*.

It has been observed, that the belief of a plurality is insinuated in the questions proposed in the Talmud, as to the meaning of that expression, Dan. vii. 9. which is rendered in our version, *The thrones were cast down*, but understood by all the Jews, as signifying that they were *set up*. It is inquired, “why the throne, on which the Ancient of days was to sit, is put in the plural?” Various answers of a trifling kind are given; but the last is, that “it is blasphemy to set the creature, on the throne of the Creator, blessed for ever.” The following remarkable words form the conclusion; “If any one can solve this difficulty, let him do it; if not, let him go his way, and not attempt it †.”

To the same purpose is the conversation between R. Joshua, the son of Levi, and Elias, at the mouth of the  
cave

\* Leslie's Socinian Controv. Dial. i. p. 49.

† Talmud, Ancient Univ. Hist. vol. iii. p. 13.

cave of Rabbi Simeon Ben Jochai, which is recorded in the Talmud. This R. Simeon, with his son R. Eliezer, are said to have concealed themselves in a cave, for twelve years, from fear of the emperor Adrian, and to have written the books of *Zohar* and *Siphri* in this retreat. “Rabbi Joshua,” according to the narrative, “inquired of Elias, Shall I reach to the future age? He answered, If *that* Lord will. For the divinity was present with them. Joshua rejoined; I see only two, but I hear the voice of three \*.”

In the ancient work, entitled *Bahir*, it is said, that “by the threefold repetition of the term *Jehovah*, we are taught, that these names of the blessed God, are three powers, and that every distinct power is like to each other, and hath the same name with it.” In the same work, these words, *The Lord reigneth*, Psa. xciii. 1. are said to “bear witness of the three existences, (or subsistences) in the blessed Creator. And the whole being closed (v. 5.) with *Jehovah*, the peculiar name of God, intimates that he is the fountain of all, and that from him are the emanations of all. Thus, in these words, *The Lord reigneth*, there is a great mystery †.

Rabbi Bechai also speaks of three degrees or excellencies, which are in God. Each of these, he says, is called Glory, and *Panim* or *Persons*. ‡ For the word is often thus translated in

\* R. Jehosua filius Levi. reperit Eliam stantem ad ostium speluncæ R. Simeonis ben Jochai; quæsit ex illo, Perveniamne in seculum futurum? Respondit, Si voluerit iste Dominus. Aderat enim ipsis sancta Divinitas (Shechinah). Regessit Josua; Binus tantum vidi, sed vocem trium audiui. Talmud, cap. ult. Sanhedr. ap. Schickardi Mishpat Hammelech, cap. 6. p. 187.

† Bedford's Serm. p. 62.

‡ Judæi tres illas Dei proprietates vocant in libro Jetsira חַדְרֵי דֵּי; id est Hypostases, et in libro Schaare Tzedek פְּנֵים הַפְּנִימִים: id est



in the Septuagint. “ The first degree is the supreme Glory,  
 “ the second the middle, and the third the latter Glory.  
 “ And this,” it is subjoined, “ is the mystery \*.”

The author of *Zohar* says ; “ The mystery of *Elohim* is  
 “ this. There are three degrees, and every one of these  
 “ degrees subsists by itself : and yet all of them are one, and  
 “ knit together in one, nor can one be separated from the  
 “ other †.” Although the Jews industriously avoid the use  
 of the word *person*, Bp. Kidder has observed the same thing  
 mentioned by Voisin, that, in the book *Shaare Tzedek*, these  
 degrees are called *persons* ‡. The author of *Zohar* ren-  
 ders Deut. vi. 4. in this manner ; “ The Lord (or Jehovah)  
 “ and our God, and the Lord are one.” In his exposition  
 of the passage, beginning with *Jehovah*, he says ; “ He  
 “ is the beginning of all things, the Ancient of Ancients,  
 “ the Garden of Roots, and the Perfection of all things ;  
 “ and he is called the *Father*. The other, or *our God*, is  
 “ the Depth, and the Fountain of Sciences, which proceed  
 “ from that Father, and is called *the Son*. The other (or  
 “ Lord) he is the *Holy Ghost*, who proceeds from them  
 “ both, and is called the Measure of the Voice. He is  
 “ one ; so that one concludes with the other, and unites  
 “ them together. Neither can one be divided from the  
 “ other. And therefore he saith, *Hear, O Israel*, that is,  
 “ join together this Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost,  
 “ and make him one essence, and one substance. For what-  
 “ soever is in the one, is in the other. He hath been the  
 “ whole, he is the whole, and he will be the whole.” These  
 words are also given by Rabbi Markante, which undoubt-  
 edly

εἰς πρῶτα five *Personas* et *Facies intrinsecas*. Obs. I. de Voisin ad  
 Martini Pug. p. 406.

\* Bedford *ibid*.

† Kidder's *Demonstr.* Part iii. p. 83.

‡ *Ibid*. p. 85.

edly implies his approbation of them \*. Will Dr P. be pleased to grant, that this is the doctrine of the Trinity? Or could he subscribe this Jewish creed, as purely Unitarian?

Bishop Kidder gives another extract from the comment of the author of *Zohar*, on the same passage. “ This is  
 “ the *mystery* of him who was before the rocks, and is  
 “ united with the *head*, the *stem*, and the *way*. By *Je-*  
 “ *hovah*,” the first Jehovah mentioned Deut. vi. 4. “ is  
 “ meant the high,” or “ first beginning; by the *stem* is  
 “ meant, the stem spoken of, Isa. xi. the stem of Jesse; by  
 “ *Jehovah*,” last mentioned in the verse, “ is meant the  
 “ *way* † ” All writers, Jewish and Christian, having  
 viewed the prophecy, Isa. xi. as respecting the Messiah,  
 does it not follow, that this Jew believed in a *divine*  
 Messiah?

Again, the same writer says; “ This is the unity of  
 “ *Jehovah* the first, *Eloheanu*, *Jehovah*; lo, all of them are  
 “ one, and therefore called one; lo, the three names are  
 “ as if they were one, and therefore are called one, and  
 “ they are one. But by the revelation of the Holy Spirit,  
 “ it is made known, and by the sight of the eye, it may  
 “ be known, that *these three are one*. And this is the  
 “ mystery of the voice which is heard; the voice is one,  
 “ and there are three things, fire, and spirit, and water,  
 “ and all of them are one, in the mystery of the voice;  
 “ and they are but one: so here, *Jehovah*, *Eloheanu*, *Je-*  
 “ *hovah*, they are one; the three forms, modes, or things,  
 “ which are one ‡.”

They illustrate this unity by the three names of the  
 soul of man; “ The three powers are all of them one, the  
 “ soul

\* Bedford's Sermon. p. 109.

† Demonstration. Part. iii. p. 83.

‡ Zohar in Num. fol. 67. ap. Gill. 1. Joh. v. 7.



“ the soul, spirit, and breath. They are joined as one ;  
 “ and they are one : and all is according to the mode of  
 “ the sublime mystery \*.”

As in the Cabbalistic tree, there are ten *Sephiroth* or *numbers*, the first is called the chief Crown, and first Glory, whose essence no creature can comprehend ; the second is called Wisdom, and the intelligence illuminating, the Crown of the creation, the Brightness of equal Unity, who is exalted above every head, and the second Glory ; and the third, sanctifying Understanding, the worker and parent of faith. They assert that these three first numbers are intellectual, and not, like the other seven, *properties* or attributes †. On the same subject it is said ; “ Between  
 “ him who produces, and those who are produced, there is  
 “ no difference. But he and they are all one, and the same  
 “ essence ; in which, in three points or monads, are formed  
 “ *the Crown, Wisdom, and Understanding* : and in these  
 “ are comprehended all the rest of the *Sephiroth*, or Numerations ‡. Rabbi Judah Levi says ; “ Behold the mystery  
 “ of the numberer, the number, and the numbered.  
 “ In the bosom of God it is one thing ; in the bosom of  
 “ man, three : because he weighs with his understanding,  
 “ and speaks with his mouth, and writes with his hand ||.”

I shall only add that, amidst all the zeal of the Jews for the divine unity, the very manner in which they express this doctrine implies a conviction of mystery. For it is one of the articles of their creed, that “ God is one by  
 “ an unity peculiar to himself,” or which hath nothing  
 “ similar

\* Id. in Exod. fol. 74. ubi sup.

† Sepher Jetzira, R. Menahem, ibid.

‡ Afis Rimomim, cap. 11. ap. Jos. de Voisin, Obs. ad Martini Pug. Fidei, p. 400.

|| Tikkune Zohar, ap. Gili ubi sup.

“ similar to it \*.” But if the divine unity necessarily implies a subsistence in one person, instead of being peculiar, it is just such an unity as belongs to every creature. By this article, the Jews undoubtedly wish to distinguish the unity of God from that of all other beings. But the Socinian creed, in this instance, is evidently framed with an express design to assimilate the divine nature to every other.

## C H A P. VII.

*Of the Doctrine of the Jews, in express reference to the MESSIAH, both at the time of our SAVIOUR's appearance, and in succeeding ages.*

IT has been already proved, that Philo ascribes real personality to the *Logos*, that he exhibits him as God, and that he gives him all the scriptural characters of the Messiah. We have also seen, that the Paraphrasts described the same person under the name of *Memra*, representing him as distinct from the Father; as his Angel or Messenger, and yet truly God; and applying to him that scriptural language, which in their time was universally allowed to denote the Messiah. The opinions of some later Jews, concerning the name *Jehovah*, a plurality in the divine essence, and the Angel whom they call *Metatron*, have been also considered. Thence it appears, that there is no just ground to doubt, that they have still had some traditional belief with respect to the doctrine of a Trinity, and that they ascribe to this Angel what they are conscious belongs only to a divine person.

But

\* Ant. Univ. Hist. vol. iii. p. 13. Stehelin's Tradition of the Jews, vol. ii. p. 225.



But after all, some may be apt to fay, that thefe testimonies are not fo direct as might have been expected in a cafe of this nature, and that their relation to the Messiah is proved only by induction. Although this kind of proof is all that can be obtained on many important fubjects, and is of itfelf abundantly fatisfying, when the confequence is natural; I fhall produce a few paffages from the writings of the Jews, in which they exprefsly declare their fentiments concerning the Messiah himfelf, or the circumftances of his appearance.

The ideas of the Paraphrafts, with refpect to the Messiah, appear from their interpretation of Pfal. xlv. which they apply to him by name, ver. 3. It is faid on ver. 12. that “ this King fhall defire the beauty of the congregation of  
“ Israel :” and the reason is, “ For he is thy Lord God,  
“ and thou fhalt worship him \*.”

It has been already feen, that they underftood Pfal. cx. as addreffed to the Word, and that not one of the Pharifees could refuse the juftnefs of our Saviour’s interpretation, when he applied it to the Messiah. But, even in later ages, this Pfalm has been underftood in the fame fenfe. R. Saadiah Gaon, when explaining thefe words, Dan. vii. 13. *And lo ! one like unto the Son of man, came with the clouds of heaven,* fays ; “ This is Messiah, our righteous-  
“ nefs, as it is written, *The Lord faid unto my Lord, Sit*  
“ *thou at my right hand,*” &c †. In Midrafch Tehillim, it is obferved, that thefe words, *Thou art my Son*, Pfa. ii. are addreffed to the fame perfon, to whom it is faid, *Sit thou at my right hand* ‡.

Indeed, in this Pfalm, the language is not, *Jehovah faid unto Jehovah*, but *unto Adonai*. According to R. Solomon Jarchi

\* See Bedford’s Serm. p. 383.

† Raimundi Martini Pugio Fidei, p. 398.

‡ Ibid, p. 399.

Jarchi, the name *Adonai* is holy and proper to God. For, commenting on the words of Lot to the Angel who spoke to him in the person of God, Gen. xix. 19. *Oh! not so, my Lord*, he says; “Our Doctors have observed, that this  
“ name *Adonai* is holy, because it is said of it, *that thou*  
“ *shouldest save my life*. For he, in whose power it is, to  
“ kill and make alive, is God\*.”

Nothing can more clearly prove, that the modern Jews find themselves as much at a loss, as their fathers were, to explain the passage consistently, without admitting the Deity of the Messiah, than their having recourse to the miserable shift of applying this Psalm, as well as the second, wholly to David, as merely respecting his security from temporal enemies †. Why have they abandoned the interpretation universally admitted by their ancestors, but from a conviction that they cannot grant that it belongs to the Messiah, in a proper sense, to sit on the right hand of God, without granting at the same time that he is the fellow of the Lord of hosts?

In Midrasch Tillim, Psal. xxiv. 1. *The earth is the Lord's*, &c. is thus explained: “*I am the Lord that maketh all*  
“ *things, that stretched forth the heavens alone, that spreadeth*  
“ *abroad the earth by myself;*” or “*by him who is with*  
“ *me*, (Isa. xliv. 24.) *Who is this with me?* David said  
“ before the blessed God, since thou hast created the hea-  
“ vens

\* Ibid. p. 395.

† Rex David de seipso composuit, cum ejus servi jurassent non permissuros sese, ut amplius cum iis in aciem se conferat, 2 Sam. xxi—Hunc ergo Psalmum concepit sub persona servorum et subditorum, jurejurando suo prohibentium eum prodire in aciem; sicque facienda est expositio: Dixit Dominus Domino meo Davidi, sede in domo mea, et in dextram meam ac robur meum fiduciam reponito, dextra enim Domini fortitudinem exercet. Est proinde sensus: Non opus est ut tu te in bellum prodeas, dextra enim Dei pro te pugnat, atque Deus B. ponet inimicos tuos scabellum pedum tuorum, &c. Chizzouk Emounah, Par. I. cap. 40.



“vens and the earth by thy Name, I ascribe them to thy  
 “Name, saying, *The earth is the Lord’s.*” But in the  
 same work, the Messiah is said to be the Name of God :  
 So on Psal. xviii. 50. *Magnifying the salvations of his King,*  
*and shewing mercy to his Messiah ;* “one scripture saith,  
 “*Magnifying ;* and another, *a tower ;* (referring to the  
 “parallel place, 2 Sam. xxii. 51. *He is a tower of salvation*  
 “*to his King*). And what is the *tower*, which is made for  
 “them ? The king Messiah shall be as a tower, as it is  
 “written, Prov. xviii. 10. *The Name of the Lord is a*  
 “*strong tower : thither the righteous runneth, and is safe\*.*”  
 It has been seen, that, according to Philo, the Logos is the  
 Name of the Lord.

In Echa Rabbati on Lam. i. 16. we have these words ;  
 “What is the name of the king Messiah ? R. Abba hath  
 “said, JEHOVAH is his name ; as it is declared, Jer. xxiii. 6.  
 “*And this is his name, by which they shall call him, JE-*  
 “*HOVAH our Righteousness.* R. Joshua ben Levi hath said,  
 “The BRANCH is his name ; as it is written, Zech. vi. 12.  
 “*Behold the man whose name is the BRANCH.* There are  
 “some who say, The Comforter, the Son of the mighty  
 “God ; as it is said, Lam. i. 16. *Because the Comforter—*  
 “*is far from me.*—Those of the house of R. Chaninah  
 “have said, his name is *Gracious* ; as it is written, Jer.  
 “xvi. 13. *I will not give the gracious one.* Those of the  
 “house of Jannai have said, *Innon* is his name, Psal. lxxii.  
 “17. *Before the sun shall his name be filiated.* R. Biba  
 “hath said, his name is *Luminous* ; as it is declared, Dan.  
 “ii. 22. *And light shall dwell with him †.*”

They thus explain Psal. xxi. 1. *The king shall joy in thy*  
*strength, &c.* “R. Nachman hath said, *Who is this King*  
 VOL. I. F “ of

\* Martini Pug p 585.

† Ibid. p. 685.

“ of Glory? *The Lord of hosts, he is the King of Glory.*  
 “ Our masters have said; No king of flesh and blood is  
 “ invested with his crown. But the holy God will give it  
 “ to the king Messiah; as it is said, (v. 3.) *Thou settest*  
 “ *a crown of pure gold upon his head.* No king of flesh  
 “ and blood is clothed with his purple. And what is it?  
 “ Confession, authority, reverence, praise and glory; as  
 “ it is said, Psal. civ. 1. *Thou art clothed with confession*  
 “ *and majesty.* And of the king Messiah, it is written,  
 “ (Psal. xxi. 5.) *His glory is great in thy salvation.* But  
 “ God hath called Moses by his name; as it is written, *See,*  
 “ *I have made thee a god to Pharaoh,* Ex. vii. 1. and so  
 “ Israel; *I have said ye are gods,* Psa. lxxxii. 6. And he  
 “ calls the king Messiah by his name. JEHOVAH is his  
 “ name. For it is said, Ex. xv. 3. *The Lord is a man of*  
 “ *war, JEHOVAH is his name.* And it is written of the  
 “ king Messiah, *This is the name by which they shall call*  
 “ *him, JEHOVAH our Righteousness.* Jerusalem also is called  
 “ by his name; *And the name of the city shall be, JE-*  
 “ *HOVAH is there,* Ezek. xlviii. 35 \*.”

The Jews cannot refuse that the name JEHOVAH is given to the Messiah. But from their obduracy, and from their hatred of the Christian Doctrine, they wish to derogate from the honour necessarily implied in this ascription, by referring to the language used with respect to Moses, Israel and Jerusalem. However, they know abundantly well, that the name *Elohim* is not like that of *Jehovah*, incommunicable; that, although Jerusalem received this name as conjoined with another word, this entirely alters the nature of the designation; and that the name is never given, either simply, or with *toar* †, as the Jews express it, that is,

in

\* Midrasch Tehil. ap. Martini Pug. p. 517.

† Vid. Glassii Grammat. Sacr. i. p. 533.



in connexion with such a noun as that here signifying *just*, to any creature whatsoever. It has already been proved, that, even according to the acknowledgment of Maimonides, the name *Jehovah* is incommunicable.

In Isa. xxviii. 5. it is said, *In that day shall the Lord of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people.* Jonathan renders these words; “In that time shall the Messiah of the Lord of hosts be for a crown,” &c. For *Jehovah* in the original, he substitutes the name of Messiah. This plainly shews that he considered it as the same privilege to the church, to have the Messiah for a crown of glory, as to have *Jehovah* himself; and of course, that he considered the Messiah as essentially *Jehovah*. It is well known, that the Jews have such a veneration for the Targum of this writer, that they ascribe to it something divine. And it may well be supposed, that he would not have dared to give such a paraphrase, had it not been generally believed by the Jews of that age, by the more enlightened part at least; that the Messiah should be God.

I have formerly quoted a passage from Justin Martyr, which clearly proves his full persuasion; that, in his time, the more learned among the Jews, admitted that the Messiah should be the adorable God\*. Now, he asserts this, even after Trypho had endeavoured to draw a veil over this part of their creed. The latter, indeed, notwithstanding all the evidences of obduracy, and of a contentious spirit, which Justin lays to his charge, and which undoubtedly appear in the course of the dispute, had not effrontery enough to affirm that none of the Jewish Doctors believed the divinity of the Messiah. Justin had asked him, “If it was acknowledged by the Jews, that any other was entitled to

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“adoration,

\* See above, p. 12.

“ adoration, and was Lord and God, besides him who receives this name in Scripture, the maker of all, *and the Messiah*, whose incarnation the whole tenor of scripture declares?” Trypho replies; “How can we acknowledge this? Since *we have made it a question*, whether there be any other besides the Father only \*.” Had not Trypho been conscious that many of his brethren expected a divine Messiah, he would never have expressed himself in this manner. Nor would Justin have asserted that they did, after Trypho had attempted to avoid so important a concession, had he not been fully persuaded of the truth of his allegation.

Some of the later Jews, amidst all their studied obscurity, plainly discover a conviction with respect to the incarnation of a divine person. For these words concerning Abraham, *And the Lord appeared to him in the plain of Mamre*, Gen. xviii. 1. are thus explained: “This is as if the scripture had said; *Though afterwards these shall be surrounded with my skin, and out of my flesh I shall see God*,” (Job xix. 26.) The preceding words so clearly point out the Messiah, that it cannot be supposed that these interpreters meant to apply them in any other sense: *For I know that my Kinsman-Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand up the latter one upon the earth*, ver. 25 †.

R. Solomon Jarchi observes on this place, that “Abraham desired to stand, but God said to him, Sit down. For

\* Καγω ειπον, μη τι αλλον τινα προσκυνητον, και κυριον, και Θεον λεγομενον εν ταις γραφαις νοiete ειναι, πλην του τουτο ποιησαντος το παν, και του Χριστου, ος δια των τοσητων γραφων απεδειχθη υμιν ανθρωπος γενομενος; και ο Τρυφων, πως τουτο δυναμεθα ειναι ομολογησαι οποτε ει-καθ' αλλος τις εσι' πλην του πατρος μονου, την τοσαυτην ζητησιν εποιησαμεθ'· Dial. p. 293

† Bereschit ketanna, ap. Martini Pug. p. 571.



“ For thou art a striking sign to thy posterity. For it  
 “ shall come to pass, that I will stand in the counsel of  
 “ the judges; as it is said (Psal. lxxxii. 1.) *The Lord*  
 “ *standeth in the assembly of the gods* \*.”

In the days of the Messiah, the Jews expected salvation immediately from God, as opposed to the *hand* of man †. According to this view, the Paraphrasts render Zech. ii. 10. “ Sing and rejoice, O church of Zion, be-  
 “ cause behold! I will reveal myself, and place my di-  
 “ vinity in the midst of thee, saith the Lord: and ma-  
 “ ny nations shall join themselves to the people of the  
 “ Lord in that day, and ye shall know that the Lord  
 “ hath sent me to prophesy unto you.” Nothing can be more evident than that they consider the speaker as a divine person; and yet as a messenger, and as declaring that he would act the part of a prophet to his church, at the same time that he placed his divinity in the midst of her. It deserves our attention, that some of the Jewish writers have explained this passage by what is said, chap. ix. 9. *Behold, thy king cometh unto thee* ‡.

R. Moses Hadarschan, after quoting these words, Cant. i. 4. *We will be glad and rejoice in thee*, subjoins; “ When  
 “ shall this be? When the captives shall ascend from hell,  
 “ and the Shechinah (or Divinity) on their head; as it is  
 “ said, Mic. ii. 13. *And their king shall pass before them,*  
 “ *and the Lord on the head of them.*” To the same purpose it is said, in Bereschit rabba on Gen. xliv. 18. “ When  
 “ shall we rejoice? When the feet of the Divinity shall  
 “ stand on the mount of Olives; as it is written, Zech. xiv.  
 “ 4. *And his feet shall stand on that day on the mount of*  
 “ *Olives* ||.”

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\* Martin. loc. sup. cit.

† Grabe Spicileg. vol. i. p. 358.

‡ Midrasch. Canticor. ap. Martini Pug. p. 512.

§ Martini Pug. p. 685. Grabe Spicileg. vol. i. p. 364.

It is very remarkable, that they even speak of this event as past. Thus, in Midrasch Tillim, it is said, in answer to that question from Psal. x. 1. *Why standest thou afar off, O Lord?* “ This is as if it had been said, *And it came to pass that, as he cried, they would not hear,* Zech. vii. 13. R. Jochanan said; Three years and a half was the Shechinah standing on the mount of Olives, and crying, *Seek the Lord, while he may be found, call up- on him while he is near,* Isa. lv. 6.\*” It is no less remarkable, that they limit the duration of this solemn address from the Divinity, exactly according to the time generally allotted to the personal ministry of the Son of God.

Even Maimonides says; “ Behold, it is explained unto thee, that our Rabbies were of opinion, that in process of time all the Israelites should receive another law, as before, *immediately* from the mouth of the blessed God † ”

Perhaps, it is in this sense that we are to understand the high ascriptions of the Jews to the Messiah in his prophetic character. Abarbanel acknowledges that he shall be greater than Moses, and that “ those things which lie hid in the hearts of men shall be clearly known to him ‡. ” Gerson says; “ And it shall come to pass, that a certain prophet shall arise, who shall *at the same time* be a prophet to all the nations of the earth; and this shall be the king Messiah; as it is said in Midrasch that the Messiah shall be far greater than Moses §.” It is not easy to account for such language on the idea of their being satisfied in their minds, that he is to be “ no other than a man like themselves.”

To

\* Martini Pug. p. 661.

† De Fundamentis, lib. iii. c. 19. Bedford, p. 389.

‡ Ad Jes. xi. ap Lampe in Joan. vi. 14.

§ In Legem, fol. 198. *ibid.*



To the Messiah they ascribe the power of taking away sin.  
 “ The purification which the Messiah will make, shall be  
 “ for the expiation of sin in general, for destroying trans-  
 “ gression and making an end of sin, which retains man-  
 “ kind under its yoke. For as the first man was the first  
 “ who sinned, so Messiah shall be the last, who shall com-  
 “ pletely take away sin\*.

According to this view, are these words, Psal. ii. 12.  
*Kiss the Son*, explained: “ This may be illustrated by a pa-  
 “ rable. A certain King was angry with his subjects.  
 “ They therefore went, and made his Son their friend, that  
 “ thus they might conciliate the mind of their King. The  
 “ Son departed, and reconciled his Father, as they had re-  
 “ conciled to themselves the Son. They went to give thanks  
 “ to the King. But the King said to them: You give  
 “ thanks to me; but go and offer them to my Son. For  
 “ had it not been for him, I should have destroyed the pro-  
 “ vince †.” The introduction of this parable, as an il-  
 lustration of the text, is entirely *malapropos*, unless it be  
 meant, not only that the Son reconciles us to the Father, but  
 that he has a just claim to the same honour and worship  
 which are given to the Father.

An ancient tradition is mentioned in Bereschit Rabba  
 on Gen. xlii. 6. that “ ten kings should reign from the  
 “ beginning of the world to the end of it; of whom the  
 “ first is the Blessed God, and the last the Messiah, accor-  
 “ ding to Psal. lxxii. 8. Dan. ii. 35. 44. and that in this  
 “ last king the kingdom should return to the Lord the  
 “ rightful owner, and that thus he who was the first king  
 “ should be the last ‡” It is said in another work, that

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“ the

\* Neve Schalom, lib. ix. c. 5. Voisin, Observ. p. 398.

† Midrasch Tillim ap. Lampe in Joan. i. 18.

‡ Martini Pugio, p. 316. Lampe in Joan. i. 50.

“ the crown of the blessed God is not put on him who is  
 “ *man only* : but God hath put it on the blessed king Mes-  
 “ siah \*.” It also deserves our attention, that even the  
 modern Jews, in their commentaries on Gen. i. 2. say,  
 that the Spirit of God, that *moved on the face of the waters*,  
 is the Spirit of the king Messiah †.

Thus, in direct contrariety to our author’s testimony, the  
 Jewish writers oppose the Messiah to a mere man. To him  
 they also ascribe the work of raising the dead ; a work, in  
 their opinion, peculiar to God, at least when considered as  
 universal. Therefore they say, that there are three keys  
 “ which are not delivered to any deputy, that of life, of rain,  
 “ and of the resurrection of the dead ‡.”

Nor is the doctrine of the miraculous conception of the  
 Messiah totally lost among them. In the Jerusalem Tal-  
 mud, it is said that these words Psal. cx. 3. *From the womb,*  
*from the morning, shall be the dew of thy youth*, are to be ex-  
 plained by Mic. v. 7. *As a dew from the Lord,—that tar-*  
*rieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men* ||.

On Gen. xxxvii. 22. R. Moses Hadarschan declares his  
 sentiments in these words : “ The Redeemer, whom I will  
 “ raise up from among you, shall not have a father, ac-  
 “ cording to Zech. vi. 12. *Behold the man whose name is*  
 “ *the BRANCH, and he shall grow up out of his place*. So  
 “ also Isa. liii. 2. *And he shall grow up before him as a*  
 “ *tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground*. So also  
 “ David says of him, Psal. cx. 3. *From the womb, &c.* In  
 “ fine, it is written, Psal. ii. 7. *This day I have begotten*  
 “ *thee* §.”

R. Solo-

\* Tanchuma, fol. 28. ap. Lampe ibid.

† Bereschit Rabba. Owen on Heb. i. 1. 2.

‡ Gerson ad Deut. xxxiv. 10. Talmud, &c. ap. Lampe in Joan. v. 21.

|| Observ. J. de Voisin in Proæm. Martini Pug. Fid. p. 125.

§ Ibid.



R. Solomon Jarchi observes on Isa. vii. 14. *Behold, a virgin shall conceive, &c.* “There are some who say that this was made the sign, because a virgin *fuit non apta generationi* \*.” Indeed, the most of their writers understand the passage of Hezekiah, or of the son of the prophet; as the sign of Judah’s deliverance. But they do not confine themselves to this application. In Bemidbar rabah (sect. 4.) the prophecy is viewed as ultimately respecting the Messiah. For it is said; “Hezekiah of himself knew the blessed God. For it is written of him, ver. 15. *Butter and boney shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good.* In like manner hath the king Messiah known the blessed God †.”

The words of the daughters of Lot, Gen. xix. 34. *That we may preserve seed of our Father*, are thus explained; “R. Tanchuma hath said; It is not written *a son*, but *seed*; that seed, viz. which shall come from another place, and that is Messiah ‡.”

On Gen. iv. 25. *The Lord hath appointed me another seed*, it is observed; “R. Tanchuma, in the name of R. Samuel, hath said; This is that seed which shall arise from another place. And what is that? It is the king Messiah ||. The same language is elsewhere ascribed to R. Nechoniah and R. Jacob the son of Abbin §.”

To the same purpose there is a remarkable passage in Bereschit Rabba; “R. Joshua the son of Levi hath said; Come and see that the way of the blessed God is not like that of flesh and blood. For flesh and blood wounds  
“ with

\* Observ. J. de Voisin in Proæm. Martini Pug. Fid. p. 125.

† Ibid. p. 124.

‡ Bereschit ketannah ap. Martini Pug. 284.

|| Bereschit Rabba, ibid.

§ Midrasch Ruth, ibid.

“ with a knife, and heals with a plaister. But the  
 “ way of the blessed God is not of this nature. For he  
 “ heals by the very means by which he wounds. It is  
 “ this that is written, Jer. xxx. 17. *For I will restore*  
 “ *health to thee, and will heal thee of thy wounds.* And  
 “ this shalt thou find in Joseph and in Israel, when he shall  
 “ heal them by the very means by which he hath wound-  
 “ ed them. Did not Israel sin in a virgin? as it is writ-  
 “ ten, Ezek. xxiii. 3. *There they bruised the teats of their*  
 “ *virginity.* And they are punished in a virgin; as it is  
 “ said, Lam. v. 11. *They ravished the women in Zion, the*  
 “ *virgins in the cities of Judah.* But he will return and  
 “ give comfort by a virgin; as it is declared, Jer. xxxi. 21.  
 “ 22. *Turn again, O virgin of Israel; turn again to these*  
 “ *thy cities.* How long wilt thou go about, O backsliding  
 “ daughter? *For the Lord hath created a new thing in the*  
 “ *earth, A woman shall compass a man.* R. Hunah, in the  
 “ name of R. Idi. and R. Joshua the son of Levi, have said;  
 “ This is the king Messiah, of whom it is said, Psal. ii. 7.  
 “ *To day have I begotten thee.* And concerning this Isaiah  
 “ says, (chap. lxii. 1.) *For Zion's sake will I not hold my*  
 “ *peace,—till the just One thereof go forth as brightness, &c.*  
 “ And it is this that the scripture hath said, Judg. v. 8.  
 “ *God hath chosen new things: then shall he conquer the*  
 “ *gates,*” or as otherwise translated, “ *then shall uncleanness*  
 “ *be subdued \*.*”

From such passages many learned men have, without  
 any hesitation, inferred that all the Jews, at the time of our  
 Saviour's appearance, were firmly persuaded of the divini-  
 ty of the promised Messiah. As I would wish invariably  
 to prefer truth to system, I must acknowledge, that, in my  
 apprehension, the premises will not warrant so unlimited a  
 conclusion.

\* Martini Pug. p. 284.



conclusion. To me it appears, that the more learned and inquisitive of that age, such especially as devoted themselves to the study of scripture, were convinced that the Messiah was foretold in language expressive of a divine character. Even the Pharisees, who paid far more regard to their own traditions than to the doctrines of revelation, could not refuse that he was the *Lord* of David; his Lord, in so exalted a sense, that the idea seemed totally repugnant to that of his being his son. Their inability to answer Jesus seems to have proceeded, in a great measure, from their unwillingness to acknowledge the justness of his claim of deity. It cannot be conceived, that they were ignorant of the current doctrine with respect to a personal Logos. But it may well be supposed that, while they knew that the scripture ascribed to the Messiah, both the attributes of deity, and the truth of humanity, their carnal minds could not easily digest the doctrine of the union of two natures so infinitely remote in one person.

If the more intelligent Jews did not believe a plurality in the divine essence, it is an unaccountable circumstance, that they should never object to our Saviour the gross absurdity of his doctrine, when they understood him as declaring that he was the Son of God in a proper sense. If the idea was totally strange to them, how do they so readily put this construction on his words, *He said that God was his Father, making himself equal with God?* John v. 18. x. 33. It seems very clear, that *the Jews* here referred to were the rulers, or members of the great Sanhedrim, who are often designed in this manner by the Evangelist John \*. That they connected the character of *the Son of God* with that of *the Christ* or *Messiah*, is also evident from their using the terms as both applicable to the same person, Luke xxii. 67. 70.

But

\* See chap. v. 15, 16. 33. 44. ix. 13. 18. 22.

But while it seems inconceivable, that they had no apprehensions of the deity of the Messiah, I am far from supposing, that they believed this doctrine in a proper manner. It appears to have made no impression on their minds. *The truth, that they knew, they held in unrighteousness. They received not the love of it.* They perverted the clearest precepts of the law, in order to accommodate them to their lusts. And we need not be surprised, though this great mystery should have had little attention from them; nay, though they should have attempted to obliterate it from their minds. They were wholly bent on a temporal salvation. Therefore, the idea of a spiritual Messiah would be extremely ungrateful. It would throw a gloom on their brightest prospects, and pour its saddening influence on their most pleasing hopes of worldly aggrandizement. Thence, many of them seem determined to reject any one who should appear as the Christ, how great soever his attestations; if his character did not correspond to their carnal inclinations. It is observable, that the chief priests and scribes curtail the prophecy of Micah, concerning the Ruler of Israel. They do not quote that part of it which respects his eternal existence, Mat. ii. 16. Some, it is evident, acted in direct contrariety to their own convictions. They believed that Jesus was the Christ. But their faith had no influence on their practice. They believed this in the same manner, as Saul did the future advancement of the typical David. *He knew well that he should surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel should be established in his hand,* 1 Sam. xxiv. 20. Yet so obdurate was his heart, that he daily sought the life of the Lord's anointed. Indeed, that king whom the Lord rejected seems, in this instance, to have prefigured those judges of Israel, who were also rejected of him, because they persecuted the glorious Antitype.



But they do not seem to have made any formal opposition to this doctrine, till it appeared that Jesus assumed no other character than that of a spiritual Saviour. For when the Jews, that is, as we may most naturally suppose, the Sanhedrim sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to John Baptist, they were enjoined to demand of him, if he was Elias? John i. 19. 21. Now this question is evidently taken from the prophecy of Malachi, ch. iii. 1. in which it is plainly declared, that the Angel of the covenant should be *the Lord*; that *Lord* who was to sit at the right hand of God, Psal. cx. 1. and whom they were to *worship*, Psal. xlv. 11. and also that he should *come to his temple*. We cannot suppose, that they understood the one part of the prophecy; and totally overlooked the other. Though they had done so, John's reply must have brought it to their recollection. For he said, *I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord*, that is, of JEHOVAH, according to the prophecy to which he refers. It is probable, that these very messengers heard the testimony of John, on the day following, when he declared the pre-existence of Christ, in the plainest terms, saying, *He was, or existed before me*, and explained the nature of this pre-existence, by *bearing record, that he was the Son of God*, John i. 30. 34. At any rate, as this was uniformly his doctrine, it could not be unknown to the Sanhedrim. For he declared to the Pharisees and Sadducees, that it belonged to Jesus to baptise with the Holy Ghost, that the church was *his floor*, and that eternal vengeance was his prerogative, Mat. iii. 7. 11. 12.

Whatever ideas the more learned Jews had with respect to the deity of the Messiah, they seem to have concealed them from the common people. They *took away the key of knowledge*, Luke xi. 52. It was natural for them to do so, as a temporal salvation engrossed all their

their hopes and desires. For the proclamation of a divine Messiah must have given a fatal blow to their own authority ; as they were in general such carnal men, and so unlike those who were prepared to welcome a spiritual Deliverer. At this period, they held the poor in the greatest contempt, calling them “ the people of the earth,” and accounting them *curfed*, John vii. 49. As they knew not the law, their teachers did not wish to make it known to them. The ignorance of the people was the basis of their authority.

The doctrine of the divinity of the Messiah seems to have been nearly lost among the vulgar. Of this the gospel-history affords various evidences. Even Joseph and Mary appear to have little acquaintance with it. Although they knew, by immediate revelation, that Jesus was the promised Messiah, the proofs of his divinity rather excited admiration than wrought conviction in their minds. When he said to them, *Wist ye not that I should be about my Father's business? they understood not the saying.* With respect, not only to this reply, but to what had been spoken by the shepherds, by Simeon, and by Anna, it is declared that Mary *kept all these sayings in her heart*, Luke ii. 49. 51.

This doctrine, indeed, seems to have been as unacceptable to some of the common people, as to those of superior rank. For when Jesus declared, that he was *the bread that came down from heaven, they murmured at him, saying, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph?* John vi. 41. 42. But these were Galileans, who were more grossly ignorant than others ; who *sat in darkness, and in the region of the shadow of death*, Isa. ix. 1. 2. It may be supposed, that those who resided at the fountain of Israel, were rather better acquainted with the character of Messiah. Accordingly, the very objection, that those of *Jerusalem* made to



Jesus, contains a proof that they expected one who should be more than man: *We know this man whence he is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is*, John vii. 27. They could not mean this of the family whence the Messiah should spring, or of the place of his nativity. For they knew that, as man, he was to be of the family of David, and to be born in Bethlehem, ver. 42. We must, therefore, be at a loss for a meaning to these words, unless we understand them as expressing some apprehensions of his divinity, still remaining even among the common people. Jesus himself attests the truth of their confession with respect to the origin of the Messiah, only as applying their language to himself; *Ye cannot tell whence I come*, chap. viii. 14.

Some of those who waited for the consolation of Israel, appear to have had far clearer views of the divine character of the Messiah than others. When Simeon says, *Mine eyes have seen thy salvation,—the Glory of thy people Israel*, Luke ii. 30. 32. he seems to acknowledge Jesus as the true *Shechinah*, the Glory of the Lord. The cloud of glory, which was the immediate token of the divine presence among them, had been long their distinguishing privilege. *To them pertained the glory*, Rom. ix. 4. It is very probable, that the venerable saint refers to that prophetic address to the church, Isa. lx. 1.—3. *Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the Glory of the Lord is risen upon thee*. He proclaims this Salvation as *prepared before the face of all people*. This is also predicted, chap. lx. 5. *The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together*. Elizabeth calls Mary the Mother of *her Lord*, Luke i. 43. Zechariah also acknowledged the Messiah as *the Highest*, ver. 76.

But can the darkness, which in that age involved the minds of the generality of the nation, with regard to the deity of the Messiah, be a sufficient argument against this doctrine?

doctrine? Indeed, it has been strenuously asserted, that it was totally unknown to them. This, however, cannot be believed by any impartial inquirer. But although it were true, must we thence infer, that God never revealed this doctrine to their forefathers, or that they never believed it? It must first be proved that, because the great body of that people expected only a temporal deliverance, Jesus was never foretold as a Saviour from sin, and that he had no claim to this character. The adversaries of the deity of Christ ought also to deny, that Jesus should have been a suffering Messiah. For if we are to regulate our faith, concerning his character, by that of the Jews, in one instance; why not in every other? Such absolute strangers were those of that age to the doctrine of the Messiah's humiliation, that, although they all knew that he was called *the Son of man*, when Jesus spoke of his being *lifted up*, they cried out, *Who is this Son of man?* as if they had never before heard of the designation, John xii. 34. All such reasoning from the ideas of this people, at or after the time of our Saviour's appearance, must be of little weight with those who know that the mysteries of the kingdom were hid from them; that they were given up to the lusts of their own hearts; that the awful message of Isaiah was fulfilled in them, *Hear ye indeed, but understand not; see ye indeed, but perceive not*, &c. (Isa. vi. 9. 10. Mat. xiii. 14. 15.) and that *they knew not the voices of the prophets which were read every sabbath day*, Acts xiii. 27.

Even the disciples were greatly under the influence of this spiritual stupor. Till the moment of our Lord's ascension, their minds were still warped with the idea of a temporal salvation. When he foretold his passion, they reckoned it totally incompatible with his character, and an event absolutely incredible. That very disciple, who gave the most noble confessions of the Messiah, was so shocked

at



at the idea, that under the impulse of the moment he entirely forgot his station, and began to rebuke his Lord, Mat. xvi. 21. 22.

It ought to be observed, however, that, considering the great privileges of the disciples, we cannot otherwise account for the astonishing darkness of their understandings, than by turning our thoughts to the sovereign dispensation of the all-wise God. It is his pleasure, under the Gospel, to confer peculiar honour on the ministration of the Spirit. As the purchase of our redemption belonged to the Son, the whole efficacy of his work œconomically depends on the operation of the third Person. Thus, the Personal ministry of Jesus had little effect, in the mean time, on the disciples themselves. For *the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified*, John vii. 39.

As the opinions of the Jews, at the time of our Saviour's appearance, are not the rule of our faith, as little is it to be regulated by those of their successors. It cannot be supposed that a people, who rejected the true Messiah, and who were therefore rejected of God, would become more spiritual in their apprehensions. On the contrary, we may naturally imagine that they would wax worse and worse. Accordingly, we find the later Jews endeavouring to defend their incredulity, by refusing the application of many scriptures to the Messiah, which were thus applied by the unanimous testimony of their ancestors. There is, however, no reason to doubt that, in many instances, they have acted contrary to their own convictions, and have denied doctrines which they unquestionably believed.

The conduct of Maimonides has been already considered. Many other proofs of their dissimulation might be produced. But at present, I shall mention only one. It has been seen, that many of the Jewish writers acknowledge the miraculous conception of the Messiah. Others, however, attempt to

explain away the meaning of their traditional language, by pretending that he is to come from Moab, and that in this sense he is *the seed that shall come from another place* \*. Rather than seem to favour the Christian doctrine, they will transfer the honour of giving the Messiah to a people excluded from the congregation of the Lord *even to their tenth generation*. The opposition made by some to the more scriptural views of the Messiah given by others, is no sufficient test of the ancient faith of the nation. For although these are not found in all their writings on this subject, their being found in any of them is a clear enough indication of the sentiments of their ancestors. For not one of their writers would have borrowed such doctrines from the Christians.

Our author founds the greatest part of his reasoning concerning the *deity* of our Saviour on the opinions of the Jews, at the time of his appearance, or in succeeding ages. But he ought to remember, that the observation which he makes with respect to the *miraculous conception*, is fully as applicable with respect to the former. “I own, however,” he says, “that the expectations of the Jews (any further than they have a real foundation in the prophecies) ought not by any means to determine our judgment in the case, so as to weigh against any proper argument that may be alleged on the other side †.”

## CHAP.

\* Voisin Obs. in Martini Rug. p. 288.

† Ear. Op. vol. iv. p. 12. 13.



## C H A P. VIII.

*Of the Faith of the ancient Jews, concerning that Person who is called the Angel of the Lord.*

THE doctrine of Philo, of the Paraphrasts, and of some later writers, concerning the divine nature, and the character of Messiah, has been particularly considered. But the most proper and convincing evidence of the faith of the ancient Hebrews, is contained in the scriptures of truth. How little regard soever some may pay to the assertions of uninspired Jewish writers, because of the confusion of their ideas, and their apparent inconsistency; if it appear from the Old Testament, that one Angel is revealed as a divine Person, and was acknowledged in this character by the Church, long before the coming of Christ; it must be granted, either that her members were polytheists, or that their scriptures revealed, and that they believed, a plurality of persons in an unity of essence. We have already considered the ascriptions of the later Jews to the Angel *Metatron*: and it will not appear surprising that they ascribed so much to him, when we attend to what the Holy Ghost reveals concerning him who is called *the Angel of the Lord*, or, as some render the expression, *the Angel-Jehovah*.

Dr P. skips over this ground as lightly as possible. “ Fre-  
 “ quent mention,” he says, “ is made in the scriptures of an-  
 “ gels, who sometimes speak in the name of God, but then  
 “ they are always represented as the creatures and the servants  
 “ of God \*.” Does the Doctor mean to assert that angels in  
 general are permitted to assume *the name of God*, or to speak

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in

\* Vol. i. p. 5.

in the first person? It is denied, that this honour is conferred on any angel but one. It is indeed most probable, that in all places of the Old Testament where we read of *the Angel of the Lord*, the uncreated Angel is meant. Unquestionable proofs of this occur in most of these places. When our author says of *angels*, that “they are always represented as the creatures of God,” he certainly means to extend this assertion to *every* Angel mentioned in scripture. But the falsity of this will appear. For either there are certain *criteria* by which God may be distinctly known from his creatures, or there are not. The latter cannot be asserted, without impeaching the wisdom of God, and without supposing that he hath left mankind a prey to idolatry. There can be no *criteria* more distinctive of God, than those names, attributes, works and worship, which are peculiar to him. If, therefore, an Angel is revealed, to whom all these belong; we must necessarily conclude that he is a divine Person, and yet distinct from him whose Angel he is said to be. That this is the case with respect to *the Angel of the Lord*, appears from many passages in the Old Testament.

We are informed, Gen. xvi. 9. that he who appeared to Hagar was the Angel of the Lord. She called him *God*, and we are assured that he was *Jehovah*, ver. 13. “*She called the Name of the Lord that spake unto her, God.*”—Indeed, this expression, *the Name of the Lord*, may be considered as a personal character, signifying, not merely that the name of *Jehovah* was given him, but that it was *in him*, (Ex. xxiii. 21.) as possessing the same nature with the Father. For we are certain from the testimony of Philo, that the ancient Hebrews knew this Angel, whom they also called the Word, by the designation of *the Name of the Lord* \*. Hagar did not call him *God* who spake *by* the Angel. But she called the

\* Leg. Allegor, lib. ii. p. 76. De Confus. Linguarum, p. 267.



the Name of the Lord *that spake to her*—God.—She ascribes the *attribute* of omniscience to him. For she called him the *God that saw her*; evidently referring to his testimony, that the Lord had *heard her affliction*, ver. 11. He revealed himself, and she believed in him, as one to whom divine works belonged. For *the Angel of the Lord said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly*, ver. 10. There can be no doubt that he here speaks in his own name; and as little that she understood him in this sense. She gave this Angel divine worship. For she addressed him as God, in the language of faith and praise, and in the ascription of divine perfection to him; *Thou God seeest me*, ver. 13. She knew no being, superior to him, as the all-seeing God. For she said, *Have I also here looked after him that seeth me?* Thus, on occasion of a single appearance only of this Angel, we find all the *criteria* of divinity appropriated to him.

Either Hagar knew that he who spake to her was an Angel, or she did not. If she did, and at the same time believed that he was a creature, she was wilfully guilty of both blasphemy and idolatry. For she gave all that honour to this Angel which she could have given to God himself; had she been persuaded that he was the speaker. If she did not know that this was an Angel, and according to the Socinian system, a creature; the fault lay wholly in the mode of revelation. God took no care, either for his own glory, or for the salvation of this woman. He communicated his will to her in such a manner as necessarily to betray her into the most fatal mistake.

Again, either this worship was acceptable, or it was not. If it was; God accepted it, either as intentionally addressed to himself through the creature as a medium, or as addressed to the creature mistaken for himself. If the former be true, there can be no objection to the Popish worship of Angels and Saints, or even to the Pagan worship of the heavenly

bodies, or of stocks and stones. For the more learned or ingenious advocates for both have still contended, that the worship was really addressed to the Supreme Being, *through* the creatures as his emblems. Indeed, the conduct of Hagar cannot admit of such an apology. For there is not the least evidence that her worship respected any being, but that to whom it was immediately addressed. If this worship was accepted, as being intentionally addressed to God, although the creature was mistaken for him; then it does not avail, whether in our worship we address the proper object, or not. God will be pleased even with that worship addressed to the Devil, if he happen to be mistaken for the Supreme Being.

If this worship was not acceptable, it is denied that there are any characters by which one may know whether one's worship be acceptable or not. Although the worship of Hagar had been as good as any ever offered, she could scarcely have had better evidence of its being well pleasing to God. She met with no reproof. On the contrary, the Angel of the Lord afterwards spoke to her out of heaven, and delivered a message of comfort to her. Nor did he in the least change his style. For he still claimed the work of *making* Ishmael *a great nation*, ch. xxi. 17. 18.

If this Angel was a creature, he was far less concerned for the glory of his Maker than that Angel who appeared to John, Rev. xix. 10. God himself was less zealous for his glory under the Old Testament, than he is under the New. In a word, this Angel was an usurper, and Hagar an idolater.

It was this Angel who *called to Abraham out of heaven*, saying "Thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me," ch. xxii. 11. 12. Will our author say that Abraham meant to offer up his son to a creature? Or, could there have been a place in *heaven* for any creature, who would  
have



have dared to claim this unequalled act of worship, as belonging to him? Indeed, the circumstance of the place being mentioned, whence this Angel spoke, both to Hagar and to Abraham, is evidently meant to distinguish him from created Angels. This of *speaking from heaven* is appropriated to God. He appeals to it as an evidence of his deity. *The Lord said unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, Ye have seen that I have talked with you from heaven*, Ex. xx. 22. Moses afterwards uses the same argument, when summing up the proofs which Israel had received of JEHOVAH being the only true God: *Out of heaven he made thee to hear his voice*, Deut. iv. 36. This circumstance is singled out, as being a proof, both of omniscience, and of almighty power. Of omniscience; because *speaking from heaven* is the sign that God *bears in heaven*, Neh. ix. 27. 28. Of almighty power; because it shews that the *voice* which he *sends out* is *mighty*, Psal. lxviii. 33. Thence also it appears that no change of place is necessary with him to whom this is ascribed, in order to the accomplishment of his will: whereas mere angels must *walk to and fro*, Zech. i. 10. be literally *sent forth*, Heb. i. 14. *fly* from heaven to earth, and come to the person or place which their commission respects, Dan. ix. 21. 23.

If the speaker on this occasion was a created Angel, the proof which satisfied him that Abraham truly feared God was the strangest that can be imagined. Now, he said, *I know that thou fearest GOD, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from ME*. He knew that Abraham was a sincere worshipper of the true God, because he was the most daring idolater that had ever appeared in the world.

*The Angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, By myself have I sworn, saith JEHOVAH, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son; that in blessing I will bless thee,*

*thee*, &c. ver. 15. 17. Perhaps, it may be said, that here the Angel only delivers the words of God, because he throws in that expression, *saieth Jehovah*. But, from the words themselves it is most natural to conclude, that he still speaks in his own name; as Abraham's not withholding his son, is the reason assigned for the promise of blessing him. Now, we have seen that the Angel said, *Thou hast not withheld thy son from me*: and we must either suppose that the same *Jehovah* is still meant, or that Abraham offered up his son both to God and to a creature. But the Spirit of inspiration leaves us at no loss with respect to the illustrious Person who swore. We are assured that this Angel did so, Judg. ii. 1. as we shall see more fully afterwards.

We are informed, Gen. xxxii. 24. that there wrestled a man with Jacob. From Hos. xii. 3. 4. we learn that this was an Angel, and yet God. *By his strength he had power with God, yea he had power over the Angel, and prevailed*. It is not meant that, by having power over a created Angel, he consequentially had power with God. For thus the climax would be destroyed, and the language ought to have been; "He had power over the Angel, yea, he had power with God." Both expressions denote one operation of power. For both refer to the same *strength* as the means. The first may denote the *nature* with which he had power, as referring to God essentially considered: and the second particularly declares the *person* with whom he wrestled. This was the *Angel-Jehovah*, or the second person of the Godhead. That this is the real meaning, is abundantly evident. For, with respect to this very person, it immediately follows, He, *viz.* Jacob, *wept and made supplication unto him*. Here we have an Angel, who not only hath the *name* of God, but divine *worship* given him. It is equally clear, that it was his prerogative to perform *works* proper to God only. For *he blessed him there*, Gen. xxxii.



29. We are also assured that this Angel was the God of Bethel, who had there appeared to Jacob. For it is further said, Hos. xii. 4. *He found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us* \*.

That no doubt may remain who this Angel is, his dignity is yet more fully declared in the following words; *Even JEHOVAH God of hosts, JEHOVAH is his memorial,* ver. 5. His dignity is declared, in such a manner as to confine this name to that nature which he possesses. We learn the same doctrine, indeed, from Gen. xxxi. 11. 13. *The Angel of the Lord spake,—saying,—I am the God of Bethel, where thou anointedst the pillar, and where thou vowedst the vow UNTO ME.* When this Angel told Jacob that he was *God*, and that very person to whom Jacob had formerly directed the most solemn acts of worship; would it ever enter into the mind of the Patriarch, that he who thus spake to him was a fellow-creature? That he knew him to be an Angel, is undeniable; for we have his own testimony to this purpose: and if he considered him as a creature, instead of being a saint, he was a gross idolater. For he not only gave this Angel his faith and worship, but ascribed the whole of his salvation, both temporal and eternal, to him as God; trusting in him, and praying to him for all blessings, when performing his last duty to his children: *God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God who fed me all my life long unto this day; the Angel, who redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads,* Gen. xlviii. 15. 16. If Jacob was an idolater, his fathers Abraham and Isaac were the same. For he declares that this Angel was the God before whom they walked. Nay, he solemnly transmitted this idolatry to his posterity. Now, in this case, can we justify God from the charge of enticing his servants to idolatry;

\* Gen. xxv. 15.

idolatry ; by allowing a messenger of his, a mere creature, to address them in such language, that they could not consider him as any other than God? Nay, on this supposition, how can we give any credit to the scriptures as a divine revelation ; since these men are still exhibited as true worshippers?

Let Socinians vainly assert what they please ; although Jacob knew this person to be an Angel, nay, wrestled with him as a man, he believed in him as the true God. For when he *saw* no one but this Angel, in the likeness of his own nature, he said, *I have seen God face to face, and my life is prolonged*, Gen. xxxii. 30. As this Angel assumed the human form, so far that Jacob could wrestle with him ; it is evident that the latter viewed this as a prelude of his actual incarnation for the work of our redemption. For he celebrates this Angel, with whom he had wrestled as a man, as his *Goël*, or *Kinsman-Redeemer* ; and prays that, in this very character, he would bless his posterity, Gen. xlviii. 16.

The *plain man* Jacob understood the doctrine of Angels far better than our learned author. He knew that there were many others, who were called Angels. But he acted towards them in a manner entirely different. During that very journey in which the Angel wrestled with him, he was met by a multitude of these created spirits, Gen. xxxii. 1. *Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him.* But he offered no libation of tears ; he supplicated no blessing from them ; nor did he once endeavour to detain them. Although he acknowledged that Angel, of whom we speak, as God ; he viewed them only as his *army*, ready to fulfil his command. He named the place, where he wrestled, *Peniel*, from God himself ; because he had *seen* him. But all the honour conferred on the other, was that of being named from his servants ; as he had no idea that



the persons, whom he *saw* there, could be considered in any superior light. *And when Jacob saw them, he said, This is God's host: and he called the name of that place Mahanaim, that is, hosts, or armies.* He carefully distinguished these *hosts* from the *God of hosts*.

It is immediately after the doctrine concerning angels, quoted above, that Dr P. expresses his doubts “whether, “in some cases, angels—were any thing more than temporary appearances, and no permanent beings; the mere “organs of the deity, used for the purpose of making himself known.” He seems conscious that one Angel, at least, claims so much to himself, and has so much ascribed to him in Scripture, that he dares not, as he regards his religious system, leave it on the ground he has taken, *viz.* in asserting that “angels sometimes speak in the name of God;” lest the Angel referred to should be found to possess such attributes, to perform such works, and to receive such worship, as might *seem* to shew the sameness of his nature with that of God. He thinks it the safest course to deny a proper being to those who are called angels, *in some cases*, at least. Doubtless, this is doing the business at once. The Doctor cuts the knot that he cannot unloose. He is as well fenced against any proof of the pre-existence of the Son of God, from this quarter, as any ancient Sadducee could have been. For we know that he denies *spirit*; and he is very doubtful whether there be such a being as an *angel*, (Acts xxiii. 8).

We have formerly considered his doctrine on this subject. But as he introduces it on this occasion, we may observe, that Jacob had no idea that the Angel-Redeemer was an *occasional* person. For he ascribes a continued existence to him, not only during the whole of his own life, but during that of Abraham, and of Isaac. For we cannot easily conceive that these patriarchs could *walk before* a non-entity.

tity. From his language also with respect to created angels, it seems most natural to think that he rather viewed them as a *standing army*, than as a temporary *militia*, raised for the business of the moment, and to be afterwards so completely *reduced*, that not a vestige should be left behind.

It seems pretty clear that it was the same uncreated Angel who appeared to Balaam; from his declaring that the way of that prophet was perverse *before him*; and *commanding* him to speak the word that *he should speak* unto him, Num. xxii. 32. 35. We must thence conclude that it was the same person who afterwards appeared and *spoke* to Balaam. On this head he declares that he had heard the *words of God*, and *seen the vision of the Almighty*, chap. xxiv. 4. We are informed that *the Spirit of God came upon him*, ver. 2. Therefore, on this occasion he acted as *the Spirit of Christ* (1 Pet. i. 11.) immediately communicated by him, in the character of the *Angel-Jehovah*.

There is no reason to doubt that it was the same Angel who appeared to Joshua, and announced himself as *captain of the host of JEHOVAH*, Josh. v. 13.—15. He stood over against Joshua *with his sword drawn in his hand*. His martial character and appearance exactly corresponded to the promise made to Israel concerning him: *If thou shalt indeed obey his voice,—then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies; and an adversary unto thine adversaries. For mine Angel shall go before thee, and bring thee in unto the Amorites, &c. and I will cut them off*, Exod. xxiii. 22. 23. In the same manner did he appear to Balaam, when he *stood in the way for an adversary against him*, because he was an adversary to Israel, Num. xxii. 22. 31. 32. and afterwards to David, when he had sinned in numbering the people, 1 Chron. xxi. 16. He indeed appeared to Joshua as a man, as he had done to Abraham, to Jacob, and as he afterwards did to Zechariah.



Zechariah. But when Joshua understood his function, he did not hesitate to consider him as divine. For he *fell on his face to the earth, and did worship*. So far was the Angel from refusing this worship, that he did not deem it sufficient. He further required the highest token of religious homage that we have any account of in Scripture. When Joshua said, *What saith my Lord unto his servant?* the captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, *Loose thy shoe from off thy foot, for the place whereon thou standest is holy*, literally *holiness*, as denoting the highest degree of local sanctity. This is the very language which JEHOVAH spoke to Moses, the predecessor of Joshua, *Exod. iii. 5*. Under the law, those places were called holy, where God was pleased to manifest himself, *2 Chron. viii. 11*. Can it be supposed that the presence of a creature could communicate this holiness? However, no reasonable person can imagine that he who appeared to Joshua was a creature. He is called JEHOVAH; and he claims the sovereign disposal of human concerns. And JEHOVAH said unto Joshua, *See, I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valour*, chap. vi. 2. It deserves our attention that the designation which JEHOVAH takes to himself on this occasion, is that which is frequently given to the Messiah. For what is rendered *Captain* literally signifies *Prince*, *Isa. ix. 6*. *Dan. x. 21. xii. 1*.

This Angel afterwards claimed the work of bringing the children of Israel out of Egypt, and of conducting them to the land of promise; declared that it was he who swore to their fathers, and that the covenant was his; and reproved the people for not obeying his voice. *And an Angel, or rather, the Angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, I MADE you to go up out of Egypt, and have BROUGHT you into the land which I SWARE unto your fathers; and I SAID, I WILL "NEVER BREAK MY CO-*

*"VENANT*

“VENANT *with you*.—But ye have not OBEYED MY  
 “VOICE,” Judg. ii. 1. 2. Is this Angel “represented as a  
 “creature,” or as a mere “servant of God?” He un-  
 doubtedly refers to the oath of JEHOVAH to Abraham.  
 Of this the Angel says, *I swear*. Could the oath of a  
 mere creature be any security to them? Or would they be  
 such fools as to think it? Could a created messenger pre-  
 sume to call the covenant his? Or would a holy creature  
 dare to swear *by himself*? But this Angel did. And we  
 may rest assured that *he swears by himself, because he could*  
*swear by no greater, by no superior being,* (Heb. vi. 13.)

Socinians vainly endeavour to find a parallel, even in  
 the conduct of fellow-creatures towards each other. An  
 earthly Embassador, indeed, represents the person of his  
 prince, is supposed to be clothed with his authority, and  
 speaks and acts in his name. But who ever heard of an  
 Embassador assuming the very name of his sovereign, or  
 being honoured with it by others. Would one in this  
 character be permitted to say, *I George, I Louis, I Frederic*?  
 As the idea is ridiculous, the action would justly be ac-  
 counted high treason. Would the most illustrious plenipo-  
 tentiary, referring to a treaty made by his sovereign with a  
 neighbouring power, and declaring his fixed resolution to  
 abide by it, say, *I will never break my covenant with you*?  
 Or, if sent to undutiful subjects, to remind them of his  
 master’s kindness and their own ingratitude, would he  
 presume to say, “*I brought you into this fertile country,*  
 “*which you now possess, but ye have not obeyed my voice?*”  
 Do not embassadors, however great their powers, in all  
 memorials, and deeds of every kind, written or spoken, still  
 use their own names, and distinguish themselves from their  
 royal masters? And can we suppose that the humble mi-  
 nisters of the King of Kings may use far greater freedom  
 with his names, attributes, works and honour, than those  
 of



of a petty fellow-worm with his? Satan is the only angel that we read of, who ever claimed the honour due to God. Socinians, under the pretence of pious zeal for the glory of the Father, as the One Supreme, rob the Son of his prerogative. Yet after all, they give it not to the Father, but lavish it among all his angelic host.

This Angel of the Lord also appeared to Gideon, Judg. vi. 12. He is called *Jehovah*, ver. 14. He claims the honour of sending Gideon, saying, *Have not I sent thee?* He promises his own presence to him, ver. 16. *And JEHOVAH said unto him, surely, I will be with thee.* By a look he communicates strength to Gideon, ver. 14. *And the Lord looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might.* Gideon addresses him as the object of prayer, ver. 17. He had no idea that this Angel was a creature. For, according to an ancient traditional notion with respect to the vision of God, he was afraid that he should die. *And when Gideon perceived that he was an Angel of the Lord, or, as it may be read, the Angel-JEHOVAH, Gideon said, Alas, O my Lord JEHOVAH; for because I have seen the Angel-JEHOVAH face to face, ver. 22.* He had asked a sign of the Angel; and he brought fire out of the rock, and consumed the sacrifice. This was the very sign to which Elijah afterwards referred the whole determination of the controversy between JEHOVAH and Baal, 1 Kings xviii. 24. *The God that answereth by fire, let him be God.* It was by this sign that Gideon perceived that he was the Angel-JEHOVAH; in the same manner, as on that occasion, when *the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt-sacrifice.* For, when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces, and they said, *JEHOVAH he is the God, JEHOVAH he is the God, ver. 29. 30.* In both instances, this was known to be a sign of the divine presence. For thus, at the dedication of the tabernacle,

nacle, God had manifested his presence, power and grace to their fathers, Lev. ix. 24.

The same glorious person appeared to Manoah and his wife, Judg. xiii. 3. 9. While they knew that he was an Angel, they, like Gideon, were afraid that they should die, because they had *seen God*; as they express themselves, ver. 21. 22. When Manoah asked this Angel's name, he said, *It is Wonderful*, ver. 18. It was not the name of him that sent him, but his own, that he thus expressed. This is a striking proof that he was that *Son*, who should be afterwards *given*. For this is one of his names, the word being the same as in Isa. ix. 6. And on this occasion, the propriety of this name was manifested by his conduct, to the conviction of the astonished spectators. For when Manoah had offered a kid unto the Lord, *the Angel did wonderfully*; and Manoah and his wife looked on, ver. 19. It is the same person that is said to have done *wonderously*, who declared his name to be *Wonderful*. The one term undoubtedly refers to the other. But he who thus did *wonderously* was JEHOVAH. Therefore, the offering was made to this Angel as JEHOVAH. For according to the original, the words run<sup>r</sup> thus: He offered *it unto JEHOVAH, and he did wonderfully*. It was undoubtedly of the Angel that the woman said, *If JEHOVAH were to kill us, he would not have received a burnt-offering, and a meat-offering at our hands: neither would he have shewed us all these things, nor would as at this time have told us such things as these*, ver. 23. It was the Angel who *received* their offering, who *shewed* and *told* them these things.

Whether Nebuchadnezzar had received any knowledge of the Jewish theology by means of Daniel, or from what might have been said by the three witnesses against his idolatry; or spake, like the high-priest, by an immediate impulse, without knowing the proper meaning of what he said,



said, or borrowed his ideas from tradition, we cannot pretend to determine. But the account which he gives of the deliverance of these faithful confessors, is perfectly consonant to the creed of the ancient Jews. *He said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire ;—and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God, Dan. iii. 25.* Afterwards he declares his sentiments concerning this illustrious Person, in these words ; *Blessed be the God of Shadrach, &c. who hath sent his Angel and delivered his servants, ver. 28.*

We have formerly seen that this Angel, when he appeared unto Joshua, made himself known as *Prince of the host of the Lord*. It would seem to be the same illustrious Messenger, who is called *Michael, one, or rather, the first of the chief princes, Dan. x. 13. Michael your Prince*, that is, the prince of the people of God, ver. 21. and *Michael the great Prince, chap. xii. 1.* The last of these passages evidently refers to the Gospel state, and expresses the whole of that distinguished appearance that he should make for the church during this dispensation. Either, Michael is he who appears as the Messiah ; or, in this prophecy, the honour which exclusively belongs to the Messiah is appropriated to another, and *the world to come is put into subjection to a mere angel*. The language of the place seems primarily to respect the incarnation of this Prince. *And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great Prince who standeth for, or who is set over, the children of thy people.* As at the time of the delivery of the prophecy, this Angel is described as sustaining a peculiar relation to the church, of a permanent nature ; when the same phraseology is used with respect to futurity, it must denote a new and more signal appearance in this relation. His appearance in our nature may properly be denominated *standing up*, as the correlate of his being *raised up* ; a phrase often used in this sense,

fenſe, Deut. xviii. 15. 18. Acts ii. 30. iii. 22. vii. 37. Indeed, the ſame term is uſed in different places, to denote the ſame illuſtrious event. *In that day there ſhall be a root of Jeſſe, who ſhall ſtand for an enſign of the people*, Iſa. xi. 10. *And he ſhall ſtand and feed in the ſtrength of JEHOVAH*, Mic. v. 4. Job expreſſes the ſame idea, although a different word is uſed in the original. *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he ſhall ſtand up the latter, or laſt one, upon the earth*, chap. xix. 25. The Patriarch declares his perſuaſion of the preſent exiſtence of this glorious Perſon, whom he claims as his Redeemer. But he was alſo aſſured that, in a future period, he would, even to the ſenſible eye, more ſignally appear in this character, as *the latter one*, who ſhould *redeem* him from all that deſtruction brought upon him by the former. For this designation may be viewed as equivalent to that uſed by the Apoſtle Paul, when he calls Chriſt *the laſt Adam*, 1 Cor. xv. 45.

The word rendered *ſtand up*, occurs often in this prophecy. In all the other paſſages, it denotes a diſtinguiſhed appearance in a new ſituation; either that of kingdoms newly formed, chap. viii. 22. or of individuals aſſuming the royal character, chap. viii. 23. xi. 2, 3, 4. 7. 20. 21. or acting a new part in this character, chap. viii. 25. If it be granted that Chriſt is meant, when we read of Michael and his angels, Rev. xii. 7. it cannot be ſuppoſed that the ſame name could belong to any other under the Old Teſtament. The *ſtanding up* of this Prince is repreſented as ſucceeded by *a time of trouble, ſuch as never was ſince there was a nation*. To what period can this ſo properly refer, as to that which ſucceeded our Lord's appearing in human nature, when the Jews were ſo ſeverely puniſhed for their unbelief? Our Lord evidently alludes to theſe very words, when, in deſcribing the calamities of that people, he ſays & *For then ſhall be great tribulation, ſuch as was not ſince the beginning*



*beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be,* Mat. xxiv. 21. That *remnant according to the election of grace,* Rom. xi. 5. which was saved during the time of trouble, seems also to be particularly pointed out in the following words of Daniel; *At that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.* What our Lord adds concerning these days of trouble corresponds with this declaration: *For the elects sake those days shall be shortened,* Mat. xxiv. 22.

But how special soever the respect which this prophecy has to the first age of Christianity, it cannot be confined to this. For the resurrection is introduced, ver. 2. But as the gospel dispensation is often prophetically represented as one day, it is well known that the events belonging to it are as often exhibited in the closest connexion, without any regard to distance of time, and that the same language frequently respects very different events; one mercy or judgment being the presage of another, and being also a partial accomplishment of a prophecy to be more fully accomplished in future. Of this kind are the predictions of our Saviour, recorded in Mat. xxiv. some of which must necessarily be viewed as respecting, both his coming to punish the Jewish nation, and his final coming; as the awful visitation of that people was undoubtedly meant as a prelude, and pledge of the certainty, of the last judgment.

However, the character of Michael not being so particularly defined as that of the divine Messenger called the *Angel of the Lord*; I do not, in the general argument, lay any stress on the view which I have ventured to give of this prophecy.

We have a striking account of this Angel in the prophecy of Zechariah. He appears as a man in the midst of the church, which is represented as in a low situation. But even in this character he appears superior to other angels,

gels, chap. i. 8. who are *sent to walk to and fro throughout the earth*, ver. 10. and give an account of the state of matters to him as their Lord, ver. 11. He is described as interceding with JEHOVAH, and as successful in his intercession, ver. 12. 13. as sent by the Lord of hosts, and yet as himself bearing this name, ver. 20. chap. ii. 8. It is observable that, throughout this prophecy, the title of *the Angel of the Lord* is appropriated to this one Angel who appears in the likeness of human nature.

It may be afterwards shewn that this was the Angel who appeared to Moses as the I AM, and who *went before* the children of Israel. But so strong is the evidence arising from the passages already considered, in support of the doctrine of our Saviour's divinity, in connexion with that of his operation as an Angel under the Old Testament, that it is scarcely conceivable that any one, who does not reject the Scriptures, should refuse the force of it, without wilfully resisting the testimony of the Spirit. If this scriptural proof has not been fairly stated, let Dr P. point out the fallacy, that none may be deceived.

Whatever ideas the Jews may be supposed to have generally entertained, at the time of our Saviour's appearance; and whatever have been their opinions since; it is evident that when the prophecy of Malachi was delivered, they expected a divine Messenger, one who had both the nature of God, and the office of an *Angel*; that same Angel who had *saved them all the days of old*. Therefore saith the prophet; *The Lord, whom ye desire, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the Messenger of the covenant whom ye delight in*, chap. iii. 1. There can be no proper reason to doubt, that the person referred to is the Messiah. This is granted even by the modern Jews\*. He

\* Chizzcuk Emounah, cap. 39.



He was peculiarly the object of their *desire* and *delight*. But our opponents must either grant that, in the days of Malachi, the Jews desired, delighted in, and of course, expected a divine Messiah; or charge the prophecy with carrying a falsehood in it; nay, one so palpable, that it could not for a moment escape any individual of that nation. This must undoubtedly have been the case, had they expected no other Messiah “than a man like themselves.” For, although *Adonai* be the word here used, it is acknowledged by the Jews, as has been already seen, that it is a name expressive of divine power\*.

## C H A P. IX.

*Of the Son being revealed in the Old Testament; as the Word, and Wisdom of God.*

**H**AVING proved, as we hope, to the satisfaction of the candid, that the ancient Jews believed in a personal Word; we proceed to examine the ground of their faith, or to inquire, if there be any evidence that the Messiah was revealed, in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, under this character. Many passages might be mentioned, which it seems most reasonable to understand in this sense. But we shall only attend to a few, which cannot with propriety bear any other meaning.

In the thanksgiving which David offered up, after the prophet was sent to inform him of God’s acceptance of his intention to build him an house, instead of the action itself, he uses this language; *For thy WORD’S sake, and according to thine own heart, hast thou done all these things,*

H 3

2 Sam.

\* See above, p. 86.

2 Sam. vii. 21. From the expression, as it appears in this place, there is no necessity for supposing that David meant the personal Word. But the case is otherwise, when we turn our eye to the parallel passage, 1 Chron. xvii. 19. *O Lord, for thy SERVANT'S, sake, and according to thine own heart, hast thou done all this greatness.* Here the Word of God appears as his servant. Under this designation, indeed, was he revealed to the church of Israel, Isa. xlii. 1. *Behold my SERVANT whom I uphold.* Some understand the expression, as it is recorded in the Chronicles, as if it were an *ellipsis*, instead of, “For the sake of the word which thou hast spoken to thy servant.” But we apprehend that no other instance of such an *ellipsis* can be produced. According to this view, in the one place it is the word; in the other the person to whom it was spoken. Thus, there must be an absolute change of the subject. If we take the language simply, without supposing an *ellipsis*, and at the same time understand the *word* as denoting the revelation formerly made to David; there is a change of the very *cause* of the divine operation. For in the former passage, God is said to do all this for *his word's* sake, that is, for *his own* sake, for the honour of his faithfulness. But according to the latter, it is all done for David's sake: and this language is ascribed to him at the very time that he is disclaiming all merit, and humbly saying, *What am I,—that thou hast brought me hitherto?*

It seems also most natural to understand 1 Sam. iii. 21. in the same sense: *And the Lord appeared again in Shiloh: for the Lord revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh, by the Word of the Lord.* It is first declared that the Lord appeared. The following clause is added as an illustration of the manner of this appearance: *For JEHOVAH revealed himself by the Word of JEHOVAH.* Literally, he *shewed himself.*



*self*. The expression is singular. As far as I can observe, it is not elsewhere used.

If we look back to Gen. xv. 1. we shall find another passage that cannot well bear a different meaning : *After these things, the Word of the Lord came unto Abram in, or by a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram : I am thy shield*. It is evident that, on this occasion, there was an appearance of the speaker. He *came*, or *was by vision*. Now it is clear from scripture, that the Father never assumed any form. This could not be a creature. For not only is he called *Lord God*, and described as the object of faith, ver. 6. but he expressly announces himself as that JEHOVAH who brought Abram *out of Ur of the Chaldees*, ver. 7. He is God the Judge, ver. 14. and he enters into covenant with Abram, ver. 18.

The Word not only appears, but is also the speaker. *The Word came—saying*. A mere word may be spoken or *said*. But we cannot easily conceive, how it should speak or *say*. This form of expression, indeed, is frequently used in the Old Testament. But no proof can be given, that it is not the personal Word who is meant in all the places where it occurs. The probability lies on the other side ; especially when it would be doing violence to the context to understand the expression differently. It cannot be said that *Jehovah* is the substantive agreeing with the participle *saying* ; because the name is here *in statu regiminis*, and therefore under the government of *Dabar*, rendered *the Word* <sup>31</sup>

It does not appear that, in the Hebrew scriptures, the noun *governed*, in the state of construction, is used as the nominative of the verb, or the antecedent of any personal or relative pronoun, to the exclusion of the noun *governing*.

It is this Word that says, *Fear not, Abram ; I am thy shield*. Neither here, nor in most of the passages where the same mode of expression is used, do we find that

common introduction of the divine messages, *Thus saith the Lord*. If *the Word* be not here understood personally, no person is mentioned. For we have seen that the name, *Jehovah*, is so connected, that it cannot denote a person distinctly from *the Word*. The pronoun *I* necessarily relates to the whole term, *the Word of Jehovah*. We also find the same character elsewhere ascribed to the Word, which is here claimed by him: *The Word of Jehovah is tried; he is a buckler, or shield to all those that trust in him*, Psal. xviii. 30. Here the pronoun *he* immediately refers to *the Word of Jehovah*.

There is evidently an interchange of language between this Word and Abram. *And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed, &c. And behold, the Word of the Lord unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir*, ver. 3. 4. *Came*, in our version, is a supplement. I shall only add, that the pronoun *he* occurs again in ver. 5. It is *the Word of Jehovah* of whom it is said; *And he brought him*, viz. Abram, *forth again*.

Hag. ii. 4. 5. has been understood by various interpreters as denoting the *Logos*. *I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts, according to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came up out of Egypt, so my Spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not*. Thus it is in our version. But the translators have marked these words, *according to*, as a supplement. The introduction of it certainly obscures the true sense. If we read the passage simply, without the supplement, the particle  $\text{לְ}$ , *eth*, may be viewed as demonstrative; *I am with you*;—*The Word*, &c. But it seems more proper to consider it as a preposition; because the  $\text{לְ}$  *be demonstrative* is joined with  $\text{דָּבָר}$ , *dabar*. Thus it may be justly translated, *with*; *I am with you,—with the Word*, &c. To make the sense agree with the supplement, our translators have rendered the conjunction  $\text{כִּי}$  *ve*, *so*. But there is no occasion



occasion to deviate from its ordinary meaning which is *and*. **אֶת** *eth*, as a preposition, seems to govern **רוּחִי** *rubi*, *my spirit*, as well as **דְּבַר** *dabar*, *the Word*;—*with the Word,—and with my Spirit remaining in the midst of you*. The word **עִמָּךְ**, being the participle, most naturally connects with the preposition. Thus *Jehovah of hosts* declares how he is present among his people. It is *with* his Word and Spirit, and by their operation. Thence the passage has justly been urged as a proof of a Trinity of persons \*.

The Word is literally said to have been *cut off*. This is the original and proper meaning of the expression rendered *covenanted*. For it is used only in a secondary sense, to signify the making of a covenant. It is also to be observed, that generally when it has the latter signification, it is joined with the word *Berith* †. Now, the Word was typically *cut off* in their coming out of Egypt, in the ordinance of the Passover, which was celebrated on the very night of their departure. He was *cut off* in all the sacrifices instituted in the wilderness. But although the ordinary sense were preferred, it would be no objection to our view of the passage. Junius and Tremellius read; *The Word in whom I covenanted*. For *the law was ordained in the hand of a Mediator*. But though the preposition, *in*, were not supposed to be included, there could be no impropriety in understanding the language of Christ: for he is *given for a covenant of the people*, Isa. xlii. 6. xlix. 8. because it is only in him that God enters into any foederal transaction with sinful creatures. Therefore, he is also called *the Messenger*, or *Angel of the covenant*, Mal. iii. 1.

Besides

\* Glassii Phil. Sacr. lib. iii. t. 6. p. 1068.

† I can find one passage only where it is used by itself to denote a foederal transaction, 2 Chron. vii. 18.

Besides the natural and proper meaning of the words, there are several things which confirm this view. It strictly agrees with the account elsewhere given of the privilege of the ancient Church, Isa. lxiii. 9. 10. *The Angel of his presence saved them.---But they rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit.* Besides, the Messiah is the great subject of this message of comfort. For it immediately follows; *Yet once, it is a little while,---and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come,* Hag. ii. 6. 7. The connexion of these words with the preceding affords an unanswerable proof, that the personal Word is meant. For the continued presence of this *covenanted Word*, is here assigned as one great reason why they were *not* to fear. Now, we are assured from undoubted authority, that the ceremonial law, as long as it continued, was *a yoke of bondage*. But this is not all. The very abolition of that word which was covenanted, or of the covenant considered as legal, is here promised as ground of confidence and comfort. For this is the unquestionable meaning of these words, *I will shake the heavens*: and thus we find them applied, Heb. xii. 26. 27. as denoting the visible frame of the Church. It is also declared, for the further consolation of believers, that this should take place in *a little while*. Now, it would be absurd to suppose, that God should declare the continuance of a covenant to be matter of comfort, at the very time that, with the same design, he promises its speedy abolition.

The Doctor evidently understands Solomon as merely allegorizing, when he speaks of *Wisdom*, Prov. viii\*. While Socinians endeavour to evade the force of any argument derived from the use of that designation, *the Word of the Lord*, by asserting that it means *God himself*; they find it necessary to change their ground with respect to *Wisdom*,  
which

\* Hist. Corrupt, vol. i. p. 24. 30.



which they understand as signifying a particular attribute of Deity. But although they speak as if they were the only people possessed of reason, they give such interpretations of scripture as leave it loaded with absurdity. For if the wise man celebrates a mere attribute, he expresses himself in a manner irreconcilable to the common rules of language. For this Wisdom says; *Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom*, ver. 14. It must be granted, either that a person is meant, or that an attribute may be the subject of an attribute; nay, that a thing may be predicated of itself. Does not the reader learn a great deal, by being informed that “wisdom belongs to wisdom?” Nor is it much better to say, in this sense, *I have strength*. Is power an attribute of the attribute of wisdom? That expression, *I was set up from everlasting*, ver. 23. can with no propriety apply to a mere perfection. When understood of personal Wisdom, it has a beautiful and comfortable meaning; as denoting his eternal ordination to the office of Mediator. In what sense can the attribute of wisdom be said to be *brought forth*? ver. 25. The language cannot be understood of any actual or operative display of this perfection. It expressly excludes such an idea. For this event is said to have been previous to creation, that is, before any external manifestation of the divine perfections. It will not be pretended, that this perfection was generated in the divine essence. And we cannot think of any view, besides that ordinarily taken, which would not do violence, either to the connexion, or to common sense.

This Wisdom is not only *brought forth*, but *brought up*, ver. 30. How can we suppose an attribute to be compared to a *foster child*? Place is assigned to it; *Then was I by him*: and affection,—*rejoicing, delights*. An inspired Evangelist, speaking of the same Wisdom, under another character, our opponents themselves being judges, borrows the  
comparison

comparifon here ufed, expreffing it more fimplly; *The only begotten, who is in the bofom of the Father*, John i. 18\*. Here, indeed, we have the ideas conveyed by both thefe terms, *brought forth*, and *brought up*, exhibited at once. That the language is applicable to a perfon only, may be afterwards proved.

The fame perfon is evidently introduced, chap. i. 20.—32. Wisdom is made to fay, *I will pour out my Spirit unto you*, ver. 23. That a fpirit may have wifdom, can be eafily conceived. But it is to fuppofe a ftrange inverfion, to fay that the attribute of wifdom may give his fpirit, or difpenfe his influences to others.

Our author endeavours to get rid of this paffage, by comparing it with others in which the figure of perfonification is employed. “One method of allegorizing,” he fays, “which took its rife in the Eaft, was the perfonification of “things without life, of which we have many beautiful “examples in the books of fcripture, as of *wifdom* by Solomon, of *the dead* by Ezekiel, and of *fin* and *death* by “the apoftle Paul †.”

That this figure is often ufed in fcripture is undeniable. But it will be obferved, that generally the perfonification is not continued long; and that the fpeaker or writer returns to the proper ftyle. There is not an example of the perfonification of one thing being fo long continued, and including fo many circumftances, any where elfe in fcripture. Befides, whatever circumftances are introduced, in the ufe of this figure, juftly apply, at leaft in a metaphorical fenfe, to their fubject. But it has been feen, that things are here afcribed to Wisdom, which, if it be underftood as a perfection,

\* Vid. Lampe in loc. Guffetii Comment. in Ling. Ebraic. in voc. **חָכְמָה**.

† Hift. Cor. vol. i. p. 24.



fection, cannot admit of any meaning. It ought also to be observed, that however frequently this figure is used, there is no difficulty in knowing that the language must be understood figuratively. It is so introduced, as scarcely to leave the weakest reader in doubt. But the passage before us, as Socinians explain it, is entirely different, in this respect, from every other of the same kind. For it is undeniable, that almost all readers and interpreters, ancient or modern, even the most learned, have viewed this as the description of a person. Besides, when this figure is introduced in the language of inspiration, it always appears with the greatest propriety and beauty. But the personification of the attribute of wisdom, considering the circumstances already mentioned, would be forced and unnatural.

There is a great difference between this passage and that referred to in Ezekiel, chap. xxxvii. There we are informed that what is narrated, took place only in vision. For the whole is explained of the house of Israel. All that was transacted, was an emblem of a spiritual work. The servants of the Lord, at his command, prophesy or preach to those who are *dead in sins*. The *flesh* and *sinews* of a profession often appear, where there is no spiritual life. This can only proceed from the *Breath* or *Spirit* of Jehovah, and must be prayed for by his servants. Here facts exactly correspond with emblems.

*Sin* is personified, Rom. vii. and said to *deceive*, to *work*, to *slay*; because it is the immediate agent in producing all these effects, as diffusing disorder and defilement through the soul. It *deceives*. For all the power of deception proceeds from it. It *works all manner of concupiscence*; as the operations of various lusts are merely the workings of this general principle. It *slays*. This word is indeed used figuratively, with respect to the mind. But still it expresses what is true in a spiritual sense. Thus it really *slew* Saul,

by driving him nearly to despair, by *working death* in his soul. *Death* is also personified. But nothing is asserted of it, which must necessarily be understood of a real person; as hath been proved with respect to Wisdom.

That apocryphal book, the Wisdom of Solomon, affords many proofs that the ancient Jews considered Wisdom as a person. I shall refer to one only. "Wisdom is the worker  
 " of all things, in whom is an understanding spirit, holy,  
 " only-begotten, manifold, subtle, lively,—quick,—who  
 " cannot be letted,---the breath of the power of God," chap. vii. 22. These things cannot apply to the attribute of wisdom. For it is here represented as the immediate agent in creation, and as what *cannot be letted*, which expressions more properly belong to power. It is said to *have a spirit*. This cannot, with any propriety, be asserted of an accident. It is *only-begotten*. To assert this of an attribute, would be a ridiculous stretch of personification. When said to be *lively, quick, &c.* it exactly corresponds with the account given, Heb. iv. 12. 13. of that Word *with whom we have to do*. It is called "the breath of the power of God." This could never be meant by any reasonable person, however much addicted to figurative writing, as a description of the perfection of wisdom. For the reverse only could be asserted. Power, as an attribute, might, by a strong figure, be denominated "the breath of the wisdom of God;" as being its expression, and manifestation. But the proposition is absurd, if inverted; unless it be meant of a person, whose generation might be expressed in this manner.

Wisdom is evidently introduced, in the New Testament, as a person. Not to insist on that passage, *Wisdom is justified of her children*, Mat. xi. 19. there are others about which there cannot reasonably be any dispute. Our Saviour uses this language; *Therefore also said the Wisdom of God,*



*God, I will send them prophets and apostles*, Luke xi. 49. The pronoun *I* evidently refers to *the Wisdom of God* as the speaker. This Wisdom not only speaks, but sends. Here there is not a shadow of reason for supposing a figurative personification. For Jesus is not delivering a parable or prophecy. The whole language of the context is strictly literal. But the Spirit of God elsewhere gives us a key for understanding this language, as used in both Testaments; by informing us that *the Wisdom of God is Christ*, 1 Cor. i. 24.





A  
VINDICATION  
OF THE  
DOCTRINE OF SCRIPTURE, &c.

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BOOK II.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT CONCERNING  
JESUS CHRIST.

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CHAPTER I.

*The Logos proved to be a Person, from the Introduction to the Gospel of John.*

AMONG the many passages in the New Testament which represent the Word as a person, the Introduction to John's Gospel appears with distinguished lustre. Therefore, in every age, the adversaries of the Deity of Christ have laboured to involve it in darkness. The sum of what is maintained by Dr P. seems to consist in these assertions :

I. That John did not mean, by the Logos, a person, but an attribute.

II. That it is almost certain that his design, in writing his Gospel, was to correct those who believed that the Logos was a person.

III. That, in the introduction to his Gospel, he alludes to the very same system as in his first Epistle, in which he blames those only who denied the reality of Christ's human nature.

I. Dr. P. asserts, that John did not mean, by the Logos, a person, but an attribute. "The Christian philosophers," he says, "having once got the idea that the Logos might be interpreted of Christ, proceeded to explain what John says of the Logos in the introduction of his Gospel, to mean the same person, in direct opposition to what he really meant, which was, that the Logos by which all things were made was not a being distinct from God, but God himself, being his attribute, his wisdom and power, dwelling in Christ, speaking and acting by him \*."

This, like the most of our author's positions, rests solely on his own assertion. But although the proof properly belongs to him, I shall endeavour to bring positive proof to the contrary. It might be urged, as an argument of no inconsiderable weight against this assertion, that those who make it cannot produce another instance, from the New Testament, of the word *Logos* being used to signify the *wisdom* or *power* of God as an attribute: whereas it hath been proved, that the correspondent term, in the Hebrew, is so used in the Old, as necessarily to denote a person: and I hope to make it appear that *Logos*, in some other passages, must be understood in the same sense. But I am willing to rest the whole controversy with respect to the meaning of the term as here used, on the evidence arising from the passage itself. For if we attentively consider the Introduction to this Gospel, which includes the first eighteen verses, we shall find almost as many arguments against the Socinian explanation, as there are words.

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\* Hist. Corrupt. vol. i. p. 31. Earl. Opin. vol. i. p. 68. 181.



It is Dr P.'s professed intention to "labour in the discovery and communication of truth\*." All who agree with him, pretend to reduce the doctrines of revelation to the level of human understanding. Those who profess to instruct mankind, especially when it is their avowed design to overthrow established opinions, ought fairly to attend to every objection, and endeavour to satisfy every reasonable inquirer. I shall, therefore, at times take the liberty of proposing a question, or of stating a difficulty, arising from their interpretations of this passage. For if the friends of the Unitarian system sincerely wish to make converts, they must not, as hath generally been their practice hitherto, deal in unsupported assertions, or start aside from the point of an argument, by proposing another of their own; but fairly meet every objection, give it due weight, and plainly demonstrate its futility.

To give a distinct view of the Evangelist's design, it may be the most proper plan to consider the verses in their order:

Ver. 1. 2. The verb *ἦν*, rendered *was*, undoubtedly applies with far more propriety to a person than to an attribute; as denoting the eternal and necessary existence of the Word. In this sense it is used by the same inspired writer with respect to God the Father, Rev. 1. 4. *ὁ ἦν, who was*. Our Lord speaks of himself in the same language, ver. 8. *I am he ὁ ἦν, who was*.

If the Evangelist meant to describe an attribute, was it not preposterous and unnecessary to say that it *was in the beginning*, that it *was with God*? If this be the sense, is he not chargeable with an unmeaning tautology, when he adds; *The same was in the beginning with God*? For who could suppose that the Divine Being existed before his own wisdom and power, that the essence of God preceded his

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perfections?

\* Dedication to Hist. Cor. p. vii.

perfections? As it is ordinary with writers to exert all their powers in framing a striking introduction; considering John merely as a writer, is this passage in any respect consonant to the elevation of thought, and propriety of expression, evident in every other part of his writings? Viewing him as inspired, is such an unnecessary assertion, especially as repeated with the greatest solemnity, worthy of the Spirit of inspiration?

Indeed, it seems undeniable that, if the Evangelist meant by this term to denote an attribute, there was no occasion whatsoever for the repetition in ver. 2; especially as the thing asserted contains no proof that this was his meaning. For if it was once understood that this term signified merely a divine perfection, instead of its being necessary repeatedly to assure the reader, that the attribute of *wisdom* or *power* was with God in the beginning, and not afterwards acquired or generated,—a single declaration of this would appear superfluous. If, then, this assertion is of no avail to prove that an attribute is meant; if, even supposing that it were, such a repetition would be unnecessary; we must endeavour to discover some sufficient reason for this repetition, which seems to have been introduced by the writer as peculiarly emphatic. The only reason that can naturally be supposed, is, that the Evangelist having asserted that the Word was God, in order to express his proper and supreme Deity, wished to guard every one against that very error into which our author hath fallen, of concluding, from this expression, that there was only one person in the divine essence. Therefore he adds; *The same was in the beginning with God.* It is ascribing a very retrograde motion to the inspired *amanuensis*, to say, that after he had spoken of the Word as an attribute, and positively asserted that it was *God himself*, he should instantly fly off from this final idea, and in the very next words exhibits his subject in a looser form,



as only *with* God. But if we view this repetition as designed to guard the reader against supposing that such an unity is meant as excludes a plurality of co-equal persons, we perceive its force and propriety in a very striking light. We have the substance of the three foregoing propositions contained in one; and not merely so, but each of these truths exhibited in its proper connexion.

The *demonstrative* οὗτος, rendered *the same*, has peculiar emphasis. For it does not merely denote the person formerly mentioned, but this person according to the very description given of him, as *God*.

Thus Basil explains the passage; "That same Word, "which was God, was also in the beginning with God \*." Here that term is used, which in different places expresses the language of the Father, when pointing out Jesus Christ as the object of his love, and of man's faith; particularly, as distinguishing him from Moses and Elias, to whom, it would seem, the three disciples were inclined to pay more respect than was lawful. Οὗτος *This is my beloved Son;—hear ye him*, Mat. xvii. 5. also iii. 17. The Baptist's particular designation of Jesus, when he pointed him out to others, as it were with the finger, is expressed in the same manner; as we learn from ver. 15. 30. 33. 34. of this chapter.

The preposition πρὸς, translated *with*, seems to be most naturally understood in the sense of παρὰ *apud*. Socinians cannot well object to this view, as it is that of their patron the learned Grotius. This mode of expression is used in other parts of scripture, with respect to the Son of God; as in Prov. viii. 30. *Then was I by him, as one brought up WITH him*. So Christ himself prays; *Now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had παρὰ σεαυτῷ,*

I 3

*with*

\* Illud ipsum Verbum, quod Deus erat, in principio quoque erat apud Deum. Ap. Lampe in loc.

*with thee before the world was*, chap. xvii. 5. Thus, the proposition *προς* marks a personal distinction. In the New Testament, it frequently denotes the presence of one person with others. In this sense our Lord says; *O faithless generation, how long shall I be (προς υμας) with you?* Mark ix. 19. And Paul; *Not only when I am present (προς υμας) with you, &c.* Gal. iv. 18 \*. But this term does not seem to be any where used, in the sense here imposed on it by Socinians, to express the residence of a quality in a subject, as essential to the subject in which it resides. *Ουτος, the same*, being thus connected with *προς*, shews that the subject, according to the account given of him as God, was *with God*, that is, the Father. The repetition of these words, *in the beginning*, as connected with the other assertions, denotes that as God, he was eternally with God : it being generally granted that *in the beginning* is an Hebrew idiom for expressing eternity †. For whatever was in the beginning, before the creation of all things, must have eternally existed. Thence, the Evangelist declares that the Word *was in the beginning with God*, to shew that his existence was coeval with that of the Father.

We generally judge of the meaning of a writer in one passage, from the sense in which he uses the same language in another, concerning which there is no dispute ; unless it appear that we must necessarily understand the same terms differently. But it is granted, even by Dr P. ‡, that John, in the introduction to his first Epistle, by *the Word of Life* means our Lord Jesus Christ. Now in what manner does he express himself there? *What was from the beginning,---concerning the Word of Life,---declare we unto you §*. How analogous this is to the language

\* Vide Lampe in Joh. i. 2.

† Sicut mos est Hebræis Aeternitatem populariter describere. Grot.

‡ Vol. i. p. 190.

§ Ο ην απ' αρχης, — περι του λογου της ζωης, — επαγγελομεν υμιν.



language used by the same writer in the introduction to his Gospel, must appear to every reader, whether he wish to perceive it or not. *In the beginning was the Word---In him was Life*\*. *Αρχη* has unquestionably the same meaning in both places. That designation, *the Word of Life*, conveys the very idea expressed in the passage before us, *In him was Life*.

It was pretended by ancient Socinians, that this name was given to Jesus, because he announced the Word of Life †. Dr P. does not refine so much. He says of the inspired writer; “What could he mean by speaking of Jesus under the figure of life,—but that he was really a man ‡.” But then he must also have meant that Christ was *eternally a man*. For he who is called *the Word of Life*, is in ver. 2. said to be *that eternal Life which was with the Father*. This evidently expresses the peculiar reason of the designation, his possessing life essentially and being the fountain of it to all creatures. Thence it is said, chap. v. 11. *This life is in his Son*.

We may also observe the exact correspondence between these words—*that eternal Life which was with the Father*, and those in the Gospel; *The same was in the beginning with God* ||. For *ην εν αρχη* and *αιωνιον* are certainly synonymous expressions.

If it be still urged that, in the introduction to the Gospel, a mere attribute is meant, let the following queries be answered: “To what purpose would it be said that that was *with God*, and *in the beginning with God*, which was God himself? Who could be ignorant, that the Creator was

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“ in

\* *Εν αρχη ην ο λογος.*—*Εν αυτω ζων ην.*

† Schlichting in loc.

‡ Vol. i. *ibid.*

|| *Ητις ην προς τον πατερα.* 1 *Επιστ.*—*Ουτος ην εν αρχη προς τον Θεον.* *Evang.*

“ in the beginning of the creation? Who would say that  
 “ the one God was with the one God? Who would oppose  
 “ this one God to the one God, as different?” I have a right  
 to put these questions to the Socinians of this age, as they  
 are the very words of one of their Patriarchs\*. Indeed,  
 it is a circumstance extremely unfavourable to the Socinian  
 system, that its supporters have found it absolutely necessary  
 so often to change their ground, in explaining this remark-  
 able passage; whereas the friends of the Deity of Christ  
 have uniformly applied it to him as a divine Person. The  
 ancient enemies of the Word rejected the whole Gospel of  
 John, because it so directly opposed their system. Some,  
 in later times, have denied the authenticity of the Intro-  
 duction; because it supplied their opponents with unan-  
 swerable arguments. The more modern Socinians, while  
 they have found it beyond their power to disprove its au-  
 thenticity, have done their utmost to render it of as little  
 use as possible, by explaining it in opposition to common  
 sense, and to all the ordinary rules of construction. Two  
 centuries ago, Socinians applied it to Christ personally con-  
 sidered: but endeavoured to explain it away, by pretending  
 that the *new* creation was meant. Those of this age under-  
 stand it of the *old*; but deny that the Word is to be view-  
 ed as a Person.

Schlichting, indeed, is more fair than many of his succeß-  
 fors. For, though not less acute than any of them, he so keen-  
 ly feels the force of truth, as not only to grant that a Person  
 is meant, and that this is Jesus; but he argues with great  
 propriety against understanding the passage of an attribute.  
 “ This Word,” he says, “ is a Person properly so called, and  
 “ that Jesus.—Undoubtedly, all these things which John  
 “ mentions, *In the beginning, &c.* and what follows, cannot  
 “ be



“ be asserted but of a Person; thence, not of the speech of  
 “ God properly so called, nor of the faculty of speaking,  
 “ nor of reason, nor of power, nor of any other attribute \*.”

*All things were made by him*, ver. 3. The subject of this assertion is unquestionably the immediate agent in creation. But Socinians understand this language of the attribute of *wisdom*. However, if any particular attribute be personified, as the more immediate agent in creation, this honour undoubtedly belongs to *power*. If *wisdom* be figuratively viewed as an agent, it is more remote than *power*; which, because of its immediate agency, is often called God's *hand* and *arm*. A consciousness that their explanation was justly liable to this objection, seems to have induced our author, and some of his brethren, to include both these attributes in the definition of the *Logos*. Therefore he says; “ The  
 “ *Logos* was—God himself, being his attribute, his wisdom  
 “ and power †.” But this definition is evidently a contradiction in terms. For wisdom and power are not *an attribute*. They are two distinct attributes. The very persons, who are such enemies to a plurality, can foist it in, when occasion serves, under the idea of perfect unity. By what figure of speech, or rule of construction, from what new discovery of the power of numbers, are we to learn that *one* is *two*? Here is *unity* including *plurality*, in the same respect. Yet these are the men who make so violent an outcry, if a plurality is said to subsist in unity, not in the same, but in a different respect.

When the Doctor published his History of Corruptions, he certainly thought that he had rightly apprehended the meaning of the sacred writer. For he informed the public, that others had “ explained what John says---in direct op-  
 “ position

\* In Joan. chap. i. p. 3.

† Hist. of Cor. vol. i. p. 31.

“ position to what he *really meant* \*.” But the learned gentleman, it would seem, has since that time some how or other got more into the secrets of the Evangelist. For he now assures us, that “ the only Logos that he acknowledged, “ was the *power of God*, an attribute of the Father †.” Socinian writers certainly feel greatly at a loss in explaining this passage. They wish, if possible, to retain the idea of *wisdom*; conscious as they are that the ordinary sense of the term *Logos* has most affinity to this. But they also know that personification more properly belongs to *power*, as the immediate agent in creation. They cannot include both, without losing the unity of their *Logos*: and when, as in this instance, the term is restricted to the attribute of *power*, its natural sense is lost, and a new one imposed, for which they have not the countenance of a single passage of scripture.

Had the Evangelist *really meant*, as our author asserts, to oppose the Gnostics only; would it not have been far more proper to have declared that all things were made by *God himself*? For they held that the world was made by one of their æons.

By the way, we may observe, in opposition to those who make the Word to be a created God, and the secondary cause of all other creatures, that δι' αὐτοῦ, *by him*, cannot be understood instrumentally. For where no matter pre-existed, there could be no instrument. If *all things* were made by him, matter itself was a part of his work; which necessarily supposes him to be a primary agent. If *without him nothing was made that was made*, it certainly follows that he was not himself made. For had he been one of the things made, he must have received his being without any agency on his

\* Ibid.

† Earl. Op. vol. i. p. 181.



his own part. Thence, it could not have been truly affirmed, that *without him* was *nothing* made.

*In him was life*, ver. 4. Some apprehend that this clause is to be restricted by the following, *and this life was the light of man*; as if the Evangelist meant only that spiritual life which Christ communicates to men\*. But it seems more natural to suppose that, having asserted in the preceding words, that all things were made by the Logos, he first shews whence this work belonged to him, by declaring that all life was essentially in him, and then particularizes one kind of life more immediately in view, as of consequence proceeding from him. The Word made all things, because all life was in him as its natural fountain; and therefore, that which regards the soul of man must in every age have been derived from him.

But the Socinian view of this verse is attended with unfurmountable difficulties. We may, indeed, form the idea of an attribute being personified. But we cannot suppose that an attribute should not only be viewed as a subject, but have something ascribed to it in the abstract; especially when the abstract is not used figuratively, but properly, as denoting the real existence of the predicate in its subject. An attribute of deity might be called a *Word*, or even a *living Word*. But scripture affords no example of power or principle being said to exist, in the abstract, in a mere attribute. Now, whatever this *Word* be, *life* is said to have been *in* it.

The communication of this life, mentioned in the words immediately following, shews that life was in the *Logos*, as its proper subject, source and repository. This further illustrates the gross impropriety of the language, if applied to an attribute. For it is ascribed as the efficient cause of all  
that

\* Lampe in loc.

that light of knowledge conferred on man. Here, there would be an accident, not merely personified, and exhibited as the subject of a principle properly residing in it; but as the proper efficient cause of another principle residing in subjects entirely different. A strange jumble of dissonant figures, indeed! as inadequate to suggest one just idea to the mind, as the fortuitous concourse of atoms, to produce a regular, animated and intelligent subject.

It ought also to be observed that, even supposing the figurative style to have been hitherto used, it is dropped here. For had it been carried on, the language would have been, "He was life, and this life," &c. These words, however, *In him was life*, are not figurative, but strictly proper; as expressing the residence of a power in its own subject. As the term *light*, here used properly, is afterwards introduced as a personal designation, it is a strong presumption that a real person is meant. For in scripture, when any thing is personified which is not really a person, the figurative style is generally first used, and then the simple. But here this plan is reversed.

Ver. 5.----11. That the same subject, whether person or attribute, is here designed *the light, that light*, and *the true light*, which is in the introduction called *the word*, will appear from a very slight attention to the context. For there is no interruption in the narrative. When it is said that all things were *made by the Word*, it is added, as the reason of this declaration, and as the evidence of that power ascribed; *In him was life*. Then light is mentioned, as the immediate effect of this principle of life, and as a further evidence of his being the source of life, because of his communicating the light of salvation. The mention of Christ's harbinger, so far from being an interruption, is a collateral proof of the continuance of the same subject. There is, indeed, a change of the designation. What is first called

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the *word*, is afterwards denominated *light*. But this was highly proper, as the ancient Jews not only called their Redeemer the *Word*, but expected him as the *Light*. The prophets gave him this appellation, Isa. ix. 1. Christ spoke of himself under the same character; *I am the light of the world*, chap. viii. 12. xii. 35. &c.

The term *ἐκεῖνος* shews that there is no change of the subject. For, according to its use, it has evidently a retrospect to all that has been previously said. The use of *αὐτον* also, ver. 10. rendered *him*, instead of *αὐτο*, *it*, which the connection with *ὅς* strictly required, shews that the Evangelist has still had but one subject in view. Besides, the same work is ascribed to the Light, as to the Word; *The world was made by him*.

There is as little reason to doubt that our Lord Jesus Christ is personally designed *the Light*. This appears from the manner in which the light is spoken of; *that Light*. He is also called *that true Light*, because he fully possesses all that the expression implies; and as contrasted with all the inferior lights which his church hath enjoyed, and immediately with the Baptist. Great was the honour conferred upon John, in being sent to *bear witness of that Light*. But this was the most that could be said of him: whereas it is given as the great evidence of Jesus being *that true Light*, that he communicates light to others. Even when he acknowledged John to be a *burning and a shining light*, he used a word signifying a borrowed light, *λυχνος* \*. John is described as *sent from God*; but he was *sent* as a mere man. He was himself *lighted* by him who *lighteth every man*. He was but a *lamp* lighted by a communication from the *true Light*. He *bore witness of that light*, only by derivation from him who derives from no other. And he could only *bear witness*.  
He.

\* Chap. v. 35.

He could not savingly illuminate any of his hearers. But Jesus *lighteth every man who cometh into the world*, whether as *sent*, like John, in an extraordinary character, or as coming in the ordinary way; whether the light communicated be that of reason, or of grace. For he is that *God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness*.

The language of the Evangelist concerning John, *He was not that Light*, affords a very strong proof that a person is meant. For if he had still spoken of an attribute, and been satisfied that he had used terms fully expressive of his meaning, what good reason can be given for here informing his reader that he had not the Baptist in his eye? If he had not still meant to describe a person, was not this a very unnecessary parenthesis?

Besides, proper personal subsistence is ascribed to this *light*; *He was in the world*. A change of situation is also asserted. This is at any rate ascribed to God improperly, and merely signifies a difference of manifestation. But it cannot be ascribed to an attribute, either properly or figuratively.

Property is also ascribed to this light; He came to *his own*. But this always supposes a person, and not an accident.

In a word, this light is said to have been rejected. *His own received him not*. It cannot be doubted, that this denotes the rejection of Christ by his own people the Jews. We must therefore suppose, either that the same person is here meant, who is at first called *the Word*, and of consequence that *Christ was in the beginning with God*; or, that a new person is introduced, without the least intimation of any change of the subject. The consistency of this with the Evangelist's design, those who assert it may shew.

It cannot, with any semblance of reason, be pretended, that the expression under consideration signifies that this

*Word,*



*Word, or Light*, was rejected, when it afterwards dwelt in the man Jesus. For not only does the structure of the passage shew that it was not an attribute, but a person, that they did not receive; but the same thing is evident from the general tenor of these passages of scripture which declare this rejection; Isa. liii. 3. *He is despised and rejected of men; ---he was despised and we esteemed him not.* Therefore he is addressed by the Father as that person *whom man despiseth, and whom the nation abhorreth*, chap. xlix. 7.

Thus, it appears that *the Light* is a Person. Therefore, Jesus being called *the Light, that Light, that true Light*; as it is this very Light of whom it is said, *In him was life*; as he, of whom this is said, is *the Word*; is it not undeniable that Jesus Christ is himself the Word? As there was creating *Life* in the Word, ver. 3. as there was the same in the Light by whom *the world was made*, ver. 10.; and as both these terms denote the same subject, is not Jesus Christ that personal Word by whom the world was made?

Ver. 12. *To as many as received him, &c.* If it be still urged that an attribute is meant in the beginning of the chapter, the same must unquestionably be meant here. For no new subject is introduced, if a new one be introduced at all, till Jesus Christ is expressly mentioned, ver. 17. or at any rate, till the Word is exhibited in a new relation, ver. 14. as *made flesh*. But how can an attribute not only be *received*, but confer power? How can one believe on the name of an attribute? An attribute is itself a name. Thence, the *name* of God often denotes his attributes. But if the Logos be merely an attribute, *believing on the Name* of the Word, is believing on the name of a name. Therefore, the expression is an absolute solecism. It ought to have been, “who believe on *the Name*,” or, at any rate, “on the “name of God,” that is, on *the Word*, that divine attribute formerly mentioned.

It would be vain to reply, that it is the name of Jesus afterwards mentioned. Not to say, that this is contradictory to all the rules of language; if Christ be personally a mere man, as Socinians assert, it would be believing on a man only. For such an inhabitation of the Word as they pretend, could never make the name of Christ the object of faith; because he is still supposed to be a creature. But they ought seriously to consider, that believing in *the Word*, who *was in the beginning with God*, is one thing necessarily implied in the faith here described. For the Evangelist plainly refers to that *name* by which he had already denoted his glorious subject, and by which he elsewhere describes him: *And his Name is called, the Word of God*, Rev. xix. 13. Believers in his Name are, therefore, in ver. 18. said to be *born*, or *begotten not of the will of man, but of God*; because it is this Word, on whose Name they believe, who *gives them power to become the sons of God*.

Ver. 14. *The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us*. Socinians say that an attribute *was* made flesh, because it dwelt in the man Jesus. But this exposition is liable to many weighty objections.

In the plain language of narrative, like that of the whole Gospel history, as far as it relates to facts, can an attribute, because it acted by a man be with propriety said to be therefore *made flesh*? This is the hardest metaphor ever used, if it does not denote a personal union.

The operation of an attribute by a Person, if this be all that is meant, is nothing new. *The Word* had been often *made flesh* before. This must have been the case, when the prophets were under the direction of the Spirit, which Socinians make to be the *power*, that is, the *Logos* of God. *The Word was made flesh*, though it may be said that it did not *dwell* among men, when the Spirit of the Lord, as a spirit of *strength*, came upon Sampson. If nothing more  
be



be meant, there was no occasion for the language of wonder in the prediction of this event. Dr P. is no friend to the doctrine of the miraculous conception. Was it any wonder, then, that *a young woman* should, in the ordinary way, *conceive and bring forth a son*? The birth of John Baptist was more surprising than that of the Saviour. For he was the son of her *who was called barren*. The father was *old*, and the mother *well stricken in years*, Luke i. 18. John was *filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb*; whereas it is denied that Jesus was so till he was thirty years of age. If there was a difference between Jesus and others who were actuated by the Spirit, in degree only; such a difference might make the effects more wonderful, but not the thing itself. For the wonder does not consist in the degree, but in the nature of the operation.

Now, Socinians assert that the *Logos* spoke and acted by the man Jesus, in the same manner as the Spirit operated on the prophets. But when they inform us that he *dwelt* in Jesus, was *united* to him and constantly acted by him; their language necessarily implies that the difference between what was enjoyed by Christ, and by the prophets, was not merely gradual, but essential. For they were under his *influence* only; and this influence was merely occasional. But as the Spirit *rested* on Jesus, the *Logos*, which according to Socinians, was this spirit, really *dwelt in* him. Now, what was this spirit, power or wisdom, which was united to, and dwelt in Jesus? Our author tells us that it was "God himself\*." He also says, that "every Socinian acknowledges, that the Deity of the Father *resided* "in the man Christ †." Thus, they grant a real union of the whole Deity to a human person, while they refuse a personal union or real incarnation. But if the whole Deity

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\* Hist. Cor. vol. i. p. 11.

† Preface to Elwall's Trial, p. 4.

was so *made flesh*, as constantly to *dwell* in the man Jesus, it has much the appearance of real incarnation, though of a very strange kind, that of one person in another.

The word ἐσκηνώσε, *dwelt*, contains an evident allusion to the *Shechinah*, or cloud of glory, which was in the earthly tabernacle. Now, according to the Socinian view of the preceding clause as signifying a mere inhabitation, the second is tautological. If it was already said that the word *dwelt in flesh*, there was no occasion for adding that he *dwelt as in a tent, or tabernacle*. This being the proper meaning of ἐσκηνώσε, the idea was anticipated. For this term is not merely connected with the following words, *among us*; but particularly refers to the manner in which he dwelt. The force of the Evangelist's language, according to the Socinian interpretation, is, "The word dwelt in the man Jesus, and "dwelt as in a tabernacle." Perhaps, it is to evade this objection, that they explain the term ἐσκηνώσε as denoting a constant residence, or abiding some considerable time\*. But on the contrary, it denotes only a temporary residence; for a *tent* is opposed to a permanent habitation. The inspired writer seems to allude to the temporary residence of the *Shechinah* in the tabernacle, as opposed to its fixed residence in the temple; or to the frequent removals of the tabernacle from one place to another, when it was always taken down, whereas God afterwards *chose a place to put his Name there*, Deut. xii. 5.

*And we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father.* The particle *as* can only be understood, as denoting either propriety, or sameness: for none, in our time, will understand it as expressive of comparison.

If viewed as denoting *propriety*, it signifies that all the glory, which is the prerogative of the only-begotten, appeared in the Word made flesh. But if the glory beheld

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\* Famil. Illustr. p. 31.



in the Word was that which became the only-begotten, does not the whole glory of the divine nature essentially belong to him; is not the *only-begotten* personally the same as the *Word*? Socinians indeed, are divided as to the sense of the term *only-begotten*. Some understand it of the miraculous conception. Others, who deny this, assert that it merely signifies that he was the peculiar object of the Father's love, and so denominated in the same sense as Isaac, who was not the only child of Abraham, but the special object of his love.

As to the first; could the whole glory of the divine nature become one who was at best a mere man? With respect to the other; the reason given by Socinians for that peculiar love, which, according to them, procured to Jesus the appellation of *only-begotten*, is his unequalled holiness. Now, how did this appear? Was it not in his being *full of grace and truth*? Nay, did it not eminently consist in these? Did not his *glory* also as really lie in the display of these perfections, as in the manifestation of wisdom or power, though it might not strike the carnal eye so much? If then, the glory of the word became Jesus, because he was the object of the Father's peculiar love; if he was so, because of his holiness, or grace and truth; if, at the same time, the glory spoken of eminently consisted in these; did not this glory become him, because he eminently possessed it already? Thus, Socinians, by rejecting the true reason of Christ being called *the only-begotten*, are reduced to the necessity of giving a thing as the reason of itself. Is not this as absurd as to say, that a man, because he is in *the state of a king* is entitled to *royalty*; while it is at the same time acknowledged, that this is the very thing which constitutes the regal state?

But it is denied that this glory became him, merely because he was the object of the Father's love, if he was a mere man. For it is a divine glory, a real possession of the attri-

butes of Deity. Christ himself claims it as such: *All that the Father hath is mine.* Every believer in Jesus might, on the same ground, claim a real communication of divine perfections. For thus our Lord speaks of the Father's love to all his people; *That the world may know that thou hast loved them, as thou hast loved me,* John xvii. 23. Therefore, to return to Socinians the objection which we owe them on this head, Christ could as little be called the *only-begotten* of the Father, because of his love, as Isaac could, according to them, be called the only son of Abraham, on another account. For the Father, in this respect, has many other sons. The most that could be said of Jesus, in regard to this, is that he is *the first born among many brethren.* Indeed, the objection, founded on the circumstance of Abraham having many other children, of itself falls to the ground. For Isaac is notwithstanding called his *only son*, in a peculiar sense. For when this language was used, Isaac was his only son by lawful marriage, as well as his only child of promise.

*As may denote sameness.* In this case, the meaning is, that the glory of the Word made flesh, is essentially the same as that of the only-begotten. Of consequence, the *Word* is not an attribute united to a person, but essentially the same person as the *only-begotten.* Can the Word be essentially different from him, and the glory essentially the same, as the proper glory of a person? It is evidently the meaning of the inspired writer, that the glory displayed by the Word, in human nature, was that very glory which belongs to the eternal Son of God. Thus, he expresses the identity of the person, notwithstanding the change of manifestation.

Here, it would be vain to recur to the pretended sense of *only-begotten*, as denoting the object of peculiar love. Supposing this to be the meaning, there is a plain, though strange, inversion of the words. For they ought to have been; "We beheld the glory of the only-begotten *as* the glory



“of the Word.” According to the Socinian hypothesis, as they now stand, what has been all along the subject becomes at once the predicate.

*Full of grace and truth.* These words suggest several other objections to the Socinian view of this passage. Though it were granted that by the Word we were merely to understand an attribute of deity, or more than one; it could not be proved that *wisdom* or *power* is exclusively, or even especially meant.

For we have no authority for this interpretation, but the assertion of Socinians. And it would be inconsistent with *reason* to assume any thing of this kind as truth, on so slender a foundation. They cannot produce one undisputed proof from the New Testament, of the term-*Logos* being used, as denoting either *wisdom* or *power*.

If we are to distinguish between the divine perfections, with respect to their display in the Mediator and his work, there are others that seem to have a prior claim to either of these. *Love* or *grace* would more naturally occur. For great as was the display of wisdom and power in the mediatory character and work, it was inferior to that of *love*. As it is distinctively declared, that *the Lord delighteth in mercy*, it is natural to imagine that his delight in this attribute would be peculiarly manifested in the work of our salvation. Therefore, especially in reference to the Gospel, it is said that *God is love*, 1 John iv. 8. And this is the only perfection that is spoken of in such peculiar language, as if the very essence of God were resolved into it.

All the manifestations of the wisdom and power of God, by Jesus Christ, must be ascribed to his grace as the spring or principle. For goodness is properly the communicate perfection of deity, to the operation of which we owe all that display of others which brings solace to sinful men.

The attributes of *grace* and *truth* are expressly men-

tioned by the Spirit of God, in the passage. They are even repeatedly mentioned; and *grace*, no less than four times within the compass of four verses. Therefore, it would have been fully as natural to have fixed on one or both of these attributes, as signified by *the Word*; especially as we sometimes find the term *λογος* constructed with *grace*, *λογω της χαριτος*, *the word of grace*, Acts xiv. 3. and sometimes with *truth*, *λογον της αληθειας*, Eph. i. 13. as well as with *wisdom*, 1 Cor. xii. 8. The Gospel is called *the word of grace*, and *the word of truth*, because the display of these perfections is its great subject. It may be afterwards proved, that Christ himself is called *the Word of the grace* of God.

These attributes are expressly mentioned as manifested in Jesus Christ, during his residence among men. For whether we connect the expression, *full of grace and truth*, with these words, *dwelt among us*, or with those immediately preceding it, *the only-begotten of the Father*, the sense is materially the same. According to the former, he is said to have appeared to men *full of grace and truth*. According to the latter, these are attributed to the only-begotten, as what properly became him. Which soever of these views be preferred, his glory is described as especially consisting in the display of these perfections. To the same purpose the apostle Peter, when he has described Jesus as *anointed with the Holy Ghost, and with power*, sums up his character in these words, *who went about doing good*, Acts x. 38. as implying that all the display of *power* made by him, immediately proceeded from the divine *grace* or *goodness*, manifesting itself in the whole of his conduct.

Perhaps, it may be said, that *grace* and *truth* are not mentioned as divine perfections; but the one as expressive of the beneficence of the human heart of Jesus, and the other of his constant integrity. But in what way soever the Word dwelt in Jesus, in these perfections consisted the glory spoken of.



of. The manifestation of these was the evidence of his possessing them. Besides, there is an evident allusion to the common language of the Old Testament, with respect to the displays of divine glory. There *mercy and truth* are said to *meet together*, Psal. lxxxv. 10. and this clearly refers to the display of these attributes in our salvation. The Evangelist seems to carry on the allusion to the pillar of cloud and fire, which is called *the glory of the Lord*. It has been thought that this especially represented these two perfections; the fire, the divine *truth*, which is the splendor of his holiness; and the cloud, surrounding the fire, that *grace* which tempers the other, without which it would be to sinners *a consuming fire*. The very word, *full*, shews the continuance of the allusion to this symbolical pillar. We have seen, that the expression *εσκηνωσε* refers to the literal tabernacle. Now, as this, when the cloud covered it, is said to have been *filled* with the glory of the Lord, Ex. xl. 34, 35. when the Word dwelt in the tabernacle of the human nature, the illustrious Person was *full* of grace and truth. In this consisted his glory: and this glory was *beheld* by his disciples, as the typical glory had formerly been, by the people of Israel.

This grace was also, in its influence, communicated to men: *Of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace*, ver. 16. But none can plead for the communication of the grace of a mere man, who do not hold the doctrine of supererogation.

It may be further observed that when God especially declares or displays his glory, he does not particularly mention his *wisdom* or *power*, but his *grace* and *truth*. Thus, in the remarkable manifestation made to Moses, JEHOVAH *proclaimed the Name of JEHOVAH,—The Lord, the Lord God merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity,*

*iniquity, and transgression, and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty, or hold it, that is, sin, innocent, Ex. xxxiv. 5.—7.* That expression, *abundant in goodness and truth*, is strictly analogous to this, *full of grace and truth*. Every thing contained in this proclamation is included in these two. He *keeps mercy, and forgives iniquity*, because *abundant in goodness*; and also, because *abundant in truth*, as being faithful to his promise. He *will not hold sin innocent*, because *abundant in truth*, even as to his threatening, in which his essential honour is as much concerned as in his promise. It deserves to be noticed, that JEHOVAH made this declaration, expressly in answer to the earnest prayer of Moses, *I beseech thee, shew me thy GLORY*, chap. xxxiii. 18.

According to the Socinian interpretation, the attributes of *grace and truth* must be supposed to be included in *wisdom or power*. The absurdity of this is evident. For though all the divine attributes, strictly speaking, are God himself; yet, when we come to distinguish them according to our manner of apprehension, we cannot say that one attribute is another, or includes another. Can we suppose an inspired apostle to say that the attribute, either of *wisdom*, or of *power*, was *full of* the attributes of *grace and truth*? And it has been seen, that if an attribute be meant in the first verse, the same must be meant here; because there has been no change of the subject.

But as Socinians are determined to explain the term *Logos* of one or more attributes of God, we may easily discern their reason for overlooking these which present themselves in the very passage. They could not make them apply so well to the work of creation, ascribed to the Word, in the beginning of the chapter. And little as they grant to *wisdom* and *power* in the work of redemption, for accomplishing which the Word was made flesh, they are resolved to yield still less to *grace and truth*. For they reduce the gift  
of



of *grace*, in Christ himself, to mere precept and example; and in his work, they destroy its very name, and change it into *debt*. They also make a sacrifice of *truth*, by denying the immutability of the moral law, the truth of the threatening, the eternity of punishment, the necessity of a real atonement; and by refusing that the prophecies and promises were really fulfilled in Christ, and that the types had any proper relation to him.

Ver. 15. *John bare witness of him, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me, for he was before me.* Socinians reject the testimony of John with respect to the dignity of Jesus; pretending that John said that Jesus was *preferred before* him, or admitted to greater honour, because he was more worthy of it. But these words, *ὅτι πρῶτος μὲν ἦν*, will not admit of this sense. For had this been meant, instead of *ἦν was*, *ἐστὶ is*, ought to have been used, to agree with *ερχομενος* and *γεγονεν*, which are both expressive of the present. Nor is this change accidental. For *ἦν* occurs again in ver. 30. though the other expression is a little varied. It must therefore signify a priority of existence. That this is the true meaning, undeniably appears from the frequent use of the other term, *πρῶτος*, in the language of the same inspired writer, as denoting the eternal existence of the Son of God. Our Lord employs it, when speaking of himself; *I am ὁ πρῶτος, the first, and the last*, Rev. i. 11 \*. If he did not exist before John, the very use of such language with respect to himself would be a certain indication of his being much inferior to the Baptist. For according to the scheme of Socinians, the latter debases himself, even in comparison with a fellow-worm; but Jesus exalts himself, at the unspeakable expence of arrogating the distinctive titles of the Supreme God. Therefore, also, even according to their interpretation, it is  
not

\* See also ver. 17. chap. ii. 8. xxii. 13.

not true, that he “did not hold it for a prey to be as “God.”

When John elsewhere describes the decline of his own honour, and the increase of his Lord's, he adds, as a sufficient reason for this; *He that cometh from above, is above all*, chap. iii. 31. He does not say, in the future, *shall be*, as referring to his exaltation, but in the present, *is*, as signifying that notwithstanding the depth of his humiliation, so that *no man received his testimony*, ver. 32. he was superior to every creature. The reason is evident. His superiority is founded on his essential dignity. For John assigns the divine origin of Jesus as the reason of his being preferred, not to himself only, but to all ministers, to all creatures without exception. To impress his hearers the more, he repeats this declaration in the same verse; only substituting *from heaven*, instead of *from above*.

Ver. 17. *The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.* Grace and truth were formerly mentioned as divine perfections, displayed in him. They are now considered as to their effects. The Hebrew believers were still greatly attached to Moses. Therefore, the Evangelist, having shewn the superiority of Jesus to John the Baptist, proceeds to illustrate his superiority to the man of God. He does so nearly in the same manner as the inspired writer to the Hebrews, chap. iii. 5, 6. where he shews that Moses was faithful as a *servant* only, but Christ as a *Son over his own house*. When the Evangelist says, *The law εδοθη, was given by Moses*, he represents him merely as the instrument employed by the supreme Law-giver. When he adds, *But grace and truth εγενετο, were made by Jesus Christ*, he clearly exhibits him as the author of all the grace communicated to others, this being *the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*, both purchased and conferred by him; and as the author of all the *truth* of the New Testament, in contra-

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distinction



distinction to the shadows of the Old. As the Evangelist uses the same word (*γενετο*) which, in ver. 3. expresses the work of the *old* creation, ascribed to the Word; it is evident that he as really ascribes that of the *new* to Jesus Christ, and thus points him out as that very Word by whom *all things were made*.

Ver. 18. *No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.* The Evangelist, having preferred Christ to Moses, evidently anticipates an objection from the unbelieving Jews. He knew they would reply, that *God spake unto Moses face to face*, Ex. xxxiii. 11. But he asserts that it had never been the privilege of any man to see God with the sensible eye, or fully to comprehend his essence with the intellectual. He seems to allude to what God had said to Moses, when he so earnestly desired to see his glory: *Thou canst not see my face; for no man can see me and live*, ver. 20.

But what the Evangelist denies with respect to every man, with respect to every creature (*ἄλλος*) without exception, he ascribes to the only-begotten. He does not indeed expressly say, that he had seen God. But he declares this truth no less effectually, by asserting that he *is in the bosom of the Father*. As this phraseology implies the incomprehensible filiation of the Son, it denotes a state of the most intimate union and communion with the Father, as necessarily flowing from this filiation. Human language cannot afford an expression that could more emphatically designate the most perfect ground of knowledge, whether respecting the nature, or the purposes of the Father. / It would almost seem to be contrasted with what God said to Moses; *Thou shalt see my back-parts, but my face shall not be seen*, Ex. xxxiii. 23. The only-begotten, being *in his bosom*, always sees his face.

When

When this language is viewed in connexion with what follows, *He hath declared*, or *acted the part of an interpreter*, it is perfectly evident that John means to ascribe to the only-begotten that vision of the Father, which he hath denied of every creature; and to insinuate that all the revelation, which he made to the Church, was the consequence of this. He gives the same testimony as the Baptist; *What he hath seen,—he testifieth*, chap. iii. 32. nay, the same as Jesus himself; *I speak that which I have seen with my Father*, chap. viii. 38. He introduces a term commonly used among the Greeks, to denote the Person who interpreted the sacred mysteries\*. A similar character is given by Elihu to the Angel of the covenant, Job xxxiii. 23.—*An angel with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand*. It is emphatically said, *ἐκείνος*, *HE hath declared*; as pointing out the great inferiority of Moses, considered as a messenger between God and the people of Israel.

Indeed, it would seem that, in this verse, the Evangelist reduplicates upon what he has previously declared, as shewing that he has all along had the same subject in his eye. When he says, that the only-begotten is *in the bosom of the Father*, it is equivalent to what he has already said of him as the *Word*, that he was *with God*. He proclaims his unchangeable existence, by asserting that he *is*, or *exists in the bosom*, &c. For this was literally true of him, even while he was on earth, as to the human nature; according to his language to Nicodemus, chap. iii. 13.—*The Son of Man, who is in heaven*. What he denies of any creature *at any time*, he attributes to the only-begotten at all times. He ever *exists* in the bosom of the Father, and therefore he ever *sees* him. When it is added, *he hath declared*, it shews in what sense the Son hath been called *the Word*, and *the Light*: as he hath not only communicated all that exter-

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\* Lampe in loc. Not.



nal revelation which the Church enjoys, but effectually *reveals* the Father, so as to illuminate the benighted understanding. In fine, although the Word was *made flesh*, and the *glory* of the only-begotten *beheld* in human nature, it is evidently refused that he was mere *man*, or a mere *creature*. For he is contradistinguished from every *man*, from every creature, however highly favoured.

II. The Doctor also says that John's design, in writing his Gospel, was to correct those who gave a personal subsistence to the Logos. "It is almost certain," he observes, "that the apostle John had frequently heard this term made use of in some erroneous representations of the system of Christianity that were current in his time, and therefore he might chuse to introduce the same term in its proper sense, as an attribute of the Deity, or God himself, and not a distinct being that sprung from him \* " What these erroneous representations were, we learn from a preceding passage: "It seems very evident that, in that introduction, the Apostle alludes to the very same system of opinions which he had censured in his Epistle, the fundamental principle of which was that, not the Supreme Being himself, but an emanation from him, to which they gave the name of *Logos*, and which they supposed to be the Christ, and in habited the body of Jesus, was the maker of all things, &c †."

He elsewhere says; "It appears to me highly probable, that it was in opposition of this doctrine of *æons*, that John wrote the Introduction to his Gospel, in which he explains the only proper sense in which the terms *Logos*, *only-begotten*, *life*, &c. of which the Gnostics made such mysteries, ought to be taken; asserting, more especially, that the *Logos*, which is spoken of in the scriptures,

" and

\* Hist. Corrupt. vol. i. p. 12.

† Ibid. p. 11.

“ and the only Logos that he acknowledged, was *the power*  
 “ *of God*, an attribute of the Father, and therefore not to  
 “ be distinguished from God himself \*.”

It has been seen that, if John, merely in his own idea, viewed the Word as an attribute, he was chargeable with great impropriety in his manner of writing. But if he meant directly to refute those who maintained that the Word was a Person, and to prove that this was no other than an attribute; every argument, already urged, applies with redoubled force. If the reason for “ introducing this “ term,” was to shew its proper sense, in opposition to the Gnostics, who gave a personal subsistence to the *Logos*; certainly, there never was a writer who did less to accomplish his purpose, nay, more to defeat it.

If John meant to refute those who ascribed personality to the Word, was not the personification of his subject, even supposing that it was meant figuratively, the most unseasonable figure ever used, and the most improper plan he could have devised? Was not this the most likely method, I do not say, for leaving the subject still in darkness, but for encouraging the error? If a writer of ordinary discretion found that a mere attribute, in consequence of being personified by former writers, came at length to be viewed as a real person, and earnestly wished to correct a mistake so fatal, as to affect the very object and truth of all divine worship, nay, wrote expressly for this end; might it not reasonably be expected, that, when he entered on his subject, he would, first of all, entirely lay aside the figurative style, and speak in the simplest language possible? Is it not granted that, on the contrary, the Evangelist adopts and continues the language of personification? Might not one as reasonably hope to extinguish fire by pouring oil upon it?

Though

\* Ear. Op. Vol. i. p. 181.



Though it were granted, that John alluded to the false doctrines of the Gnostics concerning their *æons*, and designed to correct them, it would not follow that he meant to shew that the *Logos*, whom they reckoned among their *æons*, was an attribute. The vanity of this pretence appears from what has been formerly observed. For the apostle would never have said that the *Logos* was *God*, and then that he was *with* God. He must have known that the Gnostics could not have wished a better prop for their fabric. For as they asserted that these *æons* were originally *emanations* from God, in this sense would they most probably explain his language, when he declares that the *Logos* was *God*. “But then,” would they say, “the Evangelist still acknowledges the truth of our doctrine. For he also shews that the *Logos* existed distinctly, by adding, *The same was in the beginning with God*. And he leaves his system in this state; which he would not have done, had he meant to oppose ours, as far as it relates to the distinct existence of the *Logos*.” Indeed, these famous Gnostics, the Valentinians, made the greatest use of this Gospel, in proof of their doctrine \*. According to our author’s hypothesis with respect to the design of the Evangelist, it will also be somewhat difficult for him to shew, how “an attribute of the Father,” in other words, the Father *himself*, could be said to be *only-begotten*, or to be *begotten* in any sense?

If John wished to shew that the Word was merely an attribute, he must have meant that it was *in* God; and he must also have used a term that would clearly express his idea. If he meant to signify that there was no distinction

\* Hi autem qui a Valentino sunt, eo, quod est secundum Johannem [Evangelio] plenissime utentes, ad ostensionem conjugationum suarum, &c. Iren. lib. iii. c. 11. c. 7.

tion of persons in the divine essence, would not *εἰς, in*, have been far more proper than *πρὸς, with*?

Does not that repetition, *The same was in the beginning with God*, take away all the supposed force of the preceding assertion, *The Word was God*?

If John meant to shew that the Logos was not a person, was not his conduct very unaccountable, in retaining the personification, after changing the designation of his subject?

Did he not give the greatest countenance to the very error which, it is said, he meant to oppose, by not only personifying the Light, but by doing so, after he had spoken of it without any figure, in these words, *The life was the light of men*?

As it is granted that many, in that age, believed that Christ was the Word; as the terms *Word* and *Light* denote the same subject; as it cannot be supposed that, when this Gospel was written, any continued to reckon John the Light; if the Evangelist meant to shew that Jesus was not the Word, but that this was simply an attribute, would it not have been far more natural and proper, to have said that *Jesus Christ* was not *that Light*, than to say that this character did not belong to *John*?

Had the Evangelist meant to shew that the Word was merely an attribute, is it not natural to suppose that he would have told what particular attribute was intended by this metaphorical term?

Did he mean to shew that this was *power*? How, then, instead of taking the least notice of this, does he particularly mention two other attributes?

According to the design ascribed to the Evangelist, was it not extremely odd, that he should retain the metaphorical name, and the figure of personification, in the most critical part of his narrative, saying; *The Word was made flesh*?

Would



Would it not have answered the pretended purpose far better to have said, "The power of God resided in Jesus Christ?"

If it was the apostle's design to put those right who had fatally erred from misunderstanding the language of allegory, would not such a simple declaration as the following have been more proper than all that he says? "Jesus Christ is not that Word of God, by which all things were made. For the Word is a divine perfection. But Jesus is a mere man, who owes his being to this Word." Could the Evangelist be excusable, considering the supposed circumstances, in sacrificing perspicuity to figure, or truth to elegance of diction?

If there be any such thing as inspiration, can it be supposed that the Holy Spirit would have suffered the Evangelist to have erred so far from his scope, or to have left men still in the dark about the very subject of his discourse; nay, even while it was his design to reclaim them from the supposed error, would have allowed him to go such lengths for confirming them in it?

But as the Evangelist all along speaks of the Word in language proper to a person, ascribes existence to it, presence with another, creation, the residence of life, communication of light; distinguishes it from a human person mentioned; ascribes to it coming, property, rejection, reception, the grant of power, a name, incarnation, habitation among others, the glory of a person, and fullness of perfections; though there were no other test by which we could judge of the writer's design, than this very introduction, would it not appear to *ordinary* reason, most natural to conclude, that, instead of writing to contradict and convince those who believed that the Word was a Person, he had written expressly to confirm their doctrine?

I shall only add, that the testimony of the ancients with respect to the design of John, in writing his Gospel, is of

no inconsiderable weight. Irenæus declares, that “John  
 “designed by his Gospel to remove that error which was  
 “sown among men by Cerinthus\*.” The truth of this  
 Dr P. admits †: But it is only that he may turn it his own  
 way. The apostle wrote to contradict the Gnostic idea of  
 the personality and pre-existence of the Logos. He wrote  
 in support of the Unitarian doctrine. But Jerom declares  
 that John had the Ebionites especially in his eye. “Last  
 “of all,” he says, “at the request of the bishops of Asia,  
 “he wrote his Gospel against Cerinthus and other heretics,  
 “and especially against the doctrine of the Ebionites, then  
 “beginning to appear, who say that Christ did not exist be-  
 “fore Mary ‡.” Is it objected that Jerom was too late?  
 But the testimony of Irenæus must be understood with the  
 same latitude. For, as he says that John wrote his Gospel,  
 that he might “confound and persuade them (the heretics)  
 “that one God made all things by his Word,” if we re-  
 ceive his testimony, it must be understood according to his  
 own ideas of the Word. Now, it cannot be refused that  
 he uses this term as denoting a Person ||. If any doubt of  
 this remain, let his own words be consulted, which at the  
 same time express his conviction as to the apostle’s design  
 in writing: “John declaring the one God Almighty, and  
 “the one only-begotten Christ Jesus, by whom all things  
 “were made, asserts that this Person is the Son of God,  
 “that this Person is the only-begotten, that this is the  
 “Maker

\* Lib. iii. c. 11.

† Hist. of Cor. vol. i. p. 12.

‡ Novissimus omnium scripsit Evangelium, rogatus ab Asiæ episcopis adversus Cerinthum, aliosque hæreticos, et maxime tunc Ebionitarum dogma confurgens, qui asserunt Christum ante Mariam non fuisse. Unde et compulsus est divinam ejus nativitatem edicere. Catalog. Script. Eccl. in Joan.

|| Iren. ibid.



“ Maker of all things, that this is the true Light who lighteth  
 “ every man, that this is the Maker of the world, that this  
 “ is he who came to his own, that this very Person was  
 “ made flesh, and dwelt among us \*.

Now, though we were at a loss as to John's design, which is abundantly evident from his own language, it is hardly conceivable that Irenæus, the disciple of Polycarp, the disciple of John, could be so far a stranger to it, as to suppose it to be the very reverse of what it really was. And this must have been the case, if John wrote to shew that the Word is merely an *attribute*.

## C H A P. II.

### *Of the Design of the First Epistle of John.*

**D**R PRIESTLEY asserts that John, in his first Epistle, censures those “ who believed Christ to be man only in appearance; and that this was the *only* heresy that gave him any alarm †.” Our author elsewhere enters into a particular proof of this. “ The doctrine of the Gnostics,” he says, “ concerning the Person of Christ, was so offensive to him, and it was so much upon his mind, that he begins his first Epistle seemingly in a very abrupt manner, with the strongest allusions to it. *That which was from the beginning ‡,*” &c. Thus he tries to wrest one of the

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weapons

\* Τὸ γὰρ Ἰωάννης εἷς Θεὸν παντοκράτερα, καὶ εἷς μονογενὴ Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν κηρύσσοντος, δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα γεγονέναι λέγει τὸν υἱὸν Θεοῦ τὸν μονογενῆ, τὸν πάντων ποιητὴν τὸν φῶς ἀληθινόν, φωτίζοντα πάντα ἄνθρωπον, τὸν κόσμον ποιητὴν, τὸν εἰς τὰ ἴδια ἐληλυθότα, τὸν αὐτὸν σὰρκα γεγονότα, καὶ ἐσκηνώτοτα ἐν ἡμῖν. Lib. i. c. i. p. 38.

† Hist. of Corrupt. vol. i. p. 10.

‡ Earl. Opin. vol. i. p. 190, 191.

weapons of his adversaries out of their hands, and to turn it against the Gnostics, that he may himself evade its stroke. Whatever may be thought of his dexterity in handling it, every one must admire his boldness.

He says of John ; “ What could he mean by speaking of  
 “ Jesus under the figure of *life*, as a person who had been  
 “ *heard, seen, and even handled*, so that they had the evi-  
 “ dence of all their senses, but that he was really *a man*,  
 “ had a real *human body*, and not merely the appearance of  
 “ one ; which, it is universally allowed, was an opinion that  
 “ was entertained by many persons in his time \*.” But he  
 must certainly reckon the apostle a very unskilful reasoner.  
 For, if this was his meaning, while he gave a fatal blow to  
 one false doctrine, he supported another. I need not say,  
 that the Gnostics believed the pre-existence of Christ. The  
 Doctor grants that John here “ speaks of Jesus under the  
 “ figure of *life*.” He indeed, keeps part of the *figure* behind  
 the curtain. For John speaks of Jesus as *the Word of life* :  
*That which was from the beginning, which we have heard,*  
*which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked*  
*upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of life, &c.*  
 But our author elsewhere plainly acknowledges that Christ  
 is “ called *the Word of God* † ;” though such an acknow-  
 ledgment might not have been expedient in this place.  
 However, *life* is not, in ver. 1. the name of the person  
 spoken of, but the epithet affixed to the name ; the expres-  
 sion being equivalent to *the living Word* ; but with this dif-  
 ference, that it is more emphatic, as particularly signifying  
 that he is the *fountain* of life. There can be no doubt that it  
 is the same person, who, in this passage, is called *the Life*,  
 and *the Word of life*. But if John spoke of Jesus as *life*,  
 to signify “ that he was really *a man*, what could he mean  
 “ by

\* Earl. Opin. vol. i. p. 190.

† Famil. Illustr. p. 31.



“ by speaking of ” him as *the Word of life*? It will not be said, that the *Word* itself derived its *life* from the humanity of Jesus. Did the *Word*, that is, according to the Socinian view, the *power* of God, give this human *life* to Jesus? Yet this could not have entitled him to bear its name.

The attempt to impose a sense on the term, as here used, different from that in which it occurs in the Gospel, is vain. As our opponents cannot deny that the inspired writer uses it in the same sense, both here, and in the Revelation; by what arguments can they prove that, in his Gospel, he devises a new one, not only different from the other, but diametrically opposite?

But it has been already seen, that this expression, *the Word of life*, is of the same import with that used in the Gospel, concerning the Word, *In him was life*. But how was this Word *from the beginning*? Our author, surely, will not understand the term  $\alpha\rho\chi\eta$  in one sense here, and in another when explaining the introduction to the Gospel; unless he mean to avail himself of both the contradictory expositions of Socinians; some of whom have understood it of the *beginning of the world*, and others of the *beginning of the Gospel*. Indeed, if  $\alpha\rho\chi\eta$  be not used in the same sense here, as in the Gospel, its sense is lost. The beginning of the Gospel cannot be meant; for Jesus did not then *begin to live*, or to be *really a man*: Nor the beginning of his human life; for surely, the inspired writer would never think of declaring with so much solemnity, that Jesus had *really* been a man, from the time of his becoming a man.

The apostle, however, in the following verse, expressly limits the sense of his language. As the expression, *Was from the beginning*, is equivalent to that, *In the beginning was the Word*; he shews that he had no other meaning. Therefore, he employs this striking parenthesis; *For the*  
*life.*

*life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us, ver. 2.* Dr P. endeavours to give a new turn to this verse, by substituting *manifest* in both places where *εφανερωθη* occurs; as if the apostle had only meant to say that it was *plainly seen* that Jesus was *really a living man*. But our version expresses the true sense; as this term is properly used to denote the manifestation of something, which, though it formerly existed, was hid, or not so fully known; or of a person, making himself known in a new manner. Not to mention a variety of other instances, it is thus used, 1 Tim. iii. 16. *God was manifested in the flesh*. Will our author interpret the term in the same sense there, as in the beginning of John's Epistle? Will he say, that it signifies that God was *really* incarnate?

But if John meant nothing more than that Jesus was really a man, how does he not merely call him *life*, in the abstract, (a metaphor used no where else in this sense) but *eternal life*? How does he assert that Jesus *was, or existed with the Father*; evidently referring to a state previous to his being *manifested unto us*? Was it the way to confute the Gnostic doctrine of the pre-existence of the Word, to assert the *eternity* of his existence? Was it the most direct method to prove that Christ was a real man, and no more, to declare that he had no beginning? By the manifestation of the *temporal* life of Jesus, that is, of his being *really a man*, how could he be *manifested* to the disciples as *eternal life*? Because he had been with them, as having a *real human body* how could they hence learn that he was *that Eternal Life which was with the Father*? Did this *real human body* eternally exist? Though the learned gentleman seems to reckon matter *eternal*, it cannot be supposed that he will ascribe to it *eternal life*. An enemy to revelation could not

have



have hit upon a better expedient for exposing the apostle to ridicule. But it must be evident to every candid reader, that it is by no means the truth of Christ's *human* life that John is so anxious to make known, but the real manifestation of his *divine*.

Our author, indeed, in order to support his own doctrine, makes an inspired writer deny his. In his former work he has observed, that John, in the introduction to his Gospel, “affirms that the *Logos* by which all things were made, “was not a being distinct from God, but God himself, that “is, an attribute of God \*?” Yet, he grants that John, in his epistle, calls Jesus *life*; and therefore, cannot refuse that he calls him *the Logos*, or *Word of life*. Was the Word a Person, when John wrote his Epistle, and had it become a mere Attribute, by the time that he wrote his Gospel? This was possible, indeed, according to the doctrine of *occasional personality*, which Dr P. calls *philosophical Unitarianism*. But surely, however narrow his creed as to *inspiration*, he will not go so far as to say, that John retracted, in his Gospel, what he had written in his Epistle; or that he wrote his Gospel to *censure* the errors which he had himself propagated. How, then, did the apostle call Jesus *the Word*, in this Epistle, and yet write the introduction to his Gospel, to shew that he was *not the Word*, but that this was God himself?

In another respect, the apostle can be vindicated from self-contradiction, only by supposing that Dr P. is chargeable with it. For he first asserts that John, in the introduction to his Gospel, “explains the *only proper sense* in which “the term—*life*—ought to be taken †.” Here our author certainly understands it as denoting a divine attribute. Yet, he informs us, in the course of a few pages, that, in the Epistle, it denotes only the truth of our Saviour's humani-  

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ty \*. This is a striking transition, indeed! from an attribute to a person,—from a divine attribute to a human person. If the term be used in its *only proper sense*, when restricted as in the Gospel, to the nature of *God*; how can it, in the epistle, signify nothing more than the existence of a *mere man*?

Dr P. says; “It is universally allowed, that Christ having  
“merely the appearance of a man, was an opinion that  
“was entertained by many persons in his (the Apostle’s)  
“time †.” This opinion, indeed, has been generally ascribed to Simon Magus; because, as he pretended that himself was known in Judea as the Christ, he taught that he suffered in appearance only. But as few of those called Gnostics acknowledged that he was the Christ, the opinion as to Christ having only the appearance of human nature was not generally received by Gnostics till after the death of John. Our author informs us that “the Gnostic teachers, who opposed the apostles, were Jews;” and that they “were *in all respects* the same that the Cerinthians are described to have been ‡.” He at the same time informs us, that “the Cerinthians and Carpocratians believed that Jesus was not only a man, born as other men are, but also the proper offspring of Joseph as well as of Mary ||.” If, therefore, John meant to write against Gnostics, it was certainly most natural for him to level his doctrine against those, of Jewish origin, who *opposed* him and the other *apostles*; especially as this epistle seems to have been wrote before the destruction of Jerusalem, and of consequence, before the Gentile Gnostics made any figure. How, then, can it be believed, that his principal design in writing, was to censure a heresy not maintained by those against whom he wrote; nay, that this was “the only heresy that gave him any trouble?”

Dr

\* Earl. Op. vol. i. p. 190.

† Ibid.

‡ P. 144.

|| P. 177.



Dr P. endeavours to confirm his doctrine as to the scope of this epistle, by quoting chap. iv. ver. 2, 3. *Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God. And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come, and even now already is it in the world.* “*Coming in the flesh,*” he says, “can have no other meaning than *having real flesh*, which “many of the Gnostics said Christ had not \*.” It is reasonable, however, to allow the inspired writer the liberty of explaining himself. After a digression with respect to the worldly spirit of these false prophets, he shews what he meant by Christ’s *coming in the flesh*, ver. 9. *In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.* *Coming* and *sending* are undoubtedly relative terms. *Coming in the flesh*, ver. 2. corresponds with *sending into the world*, ver. 9. Supposing that “*coming in the flesh*, can have no other meaning than *having real flesh*,” it must still follow that *sending into the world* means God’s *giving real flesh*.—To whom? To *his only-begotten Son*. Dr P. will not pretend that Jesus received this title from his miraculous conception, or the manner in which he *had real flesh*. I have not observed that he any where explains this term. But as he reckons that expression, *the Son of God*, equivalent to *the Christ*, it is most probable that he has the same view of *only-begotten*. But according to him, Jesus was not the Christ till he was *anointed* at his baptism. How, then, did God *send his only-begotten Son into the world*, that is, *give real flesh* to him, before he had such a Son? But it is denied that Jesus was the *only-begotten*, with respect to his *unction* as Messiah. For the apostle, in this very chapter,

\* Earl. Op. vol. i. p. 191.

chapter, extends this privilege to all saints. *Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.—The anointing, which ye have received of him abideth in you, &c.* ver. 20. 27. In this sense, Jesus could only be called the *first-begotten*. Nay, if the term *only-begotten* refer merely to the character of *the Christ*, believers are more properly and strictly the sons of God, than their Saviour is. For, although it is in a spiritual sense, they are really *begotten* of God. But whatever the term *only-begotten* includes, must have been true of Jesus, at least at the very time of his mission into the world; else God did not send his only-begotten Son, but only one who was to be so in consequence of his mission.

We are certainly to understand the doctrine of this epistle according to the introduction, which, our author himself being judge, is a key to the whole. If so, Christ was the *only-begotten* in a sense truly peculiar, as being *the Word of life, that eternal Life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto men, when he was sent into the world*. Whatever love God might display in afterwards making this person his Son, in the Socinian sense, the love of God could not be *manifested* in *sending* him if this character did not belong to him before his mission. If this *sending* refer to temporal life only, how can we *live through him*? If nothing more be meant than his *having real flesh*, Jesus was like the first man *made a living soul*, but he cannot be a *quicken- ing spirit*.

The Doctor adds; “*Coming* here cannot imply any pre-  
“existent state; for then the flesh in which he came must  
“have pre-existed\*.” But this is a mere quibble. For by a parity of reason, when God says, *Lo, I come to thee in a thick cloud*, Ex. xix. 9. we cannot believe the pre-existence of the glorious Person who came in this manner,  
without

\* Earl. Op. vol. i. p. 191.



without believing that of the cloud also. Some think that *εν σαρκι* is here used for *εις σαρκα* *into the flesh*, the one being often put for the other \*. But though the ordinary sense of the preposition be retained, the most that the expression *in the flesh* can signify, is the *manner* in which Christ *came*. And undoubtedly, a person, who has previously existed, may be said to *come* in a particular manner, without its being necessarily supposed that the *manner* pre-existed, as well as the *person*.

The learned gentleman is not quite pleased with the translation of this passage. He says; “It might be rendered, that *Jesus is Christ come in the flesh*.” But there is still another version fully as natural, *Whosoever shall confess Jesus Christ who hath come in the flesh* †. Thus, the principal subject of confession is not his *coming in the flesh*, but Jesus Christ himself in the whole extent of his character. This agrees better with the apostle’s illustration of this confession in ver. 9, 10. where Jesus is described as the *propitiation*, and *the Saviour of the world*; and in ver. 15. where it is peculiarly pointed to the essential dignity of his Person; *Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him*. Had John meant directly to oppose the doctrine of an *apparent* humanity, every one must see that his language would have been far more proper, had he said, *that Jesus is the Son of man*; especially as this is the expression ordinarily used in scripture, to denote his mediatory character. Instead of saying, *come in the flesh*, it would have conveyed the apostle’s idea far more clearly, had he spoken of Christ’s coming *of the flesh*; as his language is accidentally expressed by our author, in his History of Corruptions ‡.

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\* Vid. Glaucci Rhet. p. 527. Wolfii Cur. Phil. in loc. vol. v.

† This is the translation given of the phrase by Dr Whitby, before he became Socinian.

‡ Vol. i. p. 10.

In reply to what had been said by the learned Dr Horsley, now Bishop of St David's, that the expression *coming in the flesh*, led to the notion of Jesus having "had his choice" of different ways of coming," our author observes; "On the contrary, I think the expression sufficiently similar to other Jewish phrases, of which we find various examples in the scriptures, and that it may be explained by the phrase *partaker of flesh and blood*, Heb. ii. 14 \*." But the Doctor is very unhappy in his choice of a parallel text. For the very next clause disproves his allegation. The apostle uses the phrase referred to with respect to *the children*. Does it therefore follow that the language of John may be explained by it? On the contrary, the inspired writer to the Hebrews varies his language, when he speaks of the *Leader of our salvation*. He knew that it would naturally occur, that men were entirely passive in receiving human nature. Therefore, he uses an expression, with respect to Christ, which denotes action: *He took part of the same*. It is equivalent to that in Phil. ii. 7. *He took upon himself the form of a servant*. As this language can admit only of an active sense, it is evident, from the connexion, that it respects not any thing posterior to the incarnation of our Lord, but his very assumption of our nature.

Dr P. adds; "If the word *coming* must necessarily mean *coming from heaven*, and imply a pre-existent state, John the Baptist must have pre-existed: for our Saviour uses that expression concerning him, as well as concerning himself, Matt. xi. 18, 19. *John came neither eating nor drinking.—The Son of Man came eating and drinking, &c. †*" And undoubtedly, the word *coming*, as used concerning both, implies pre-existence of a certain kind. For it refers to the entrance of both on their public ministrations,

\* Earl. Op. vol. i. p. 193.

† Ibid.



strations, or to the manner in which Christ and his forerunner severally appeared in a public character. With this limitation, our Lord says, ver. 12. *From the days of John until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence*; not from the time of his birth, but of the commencement of his ministry. Besides, *coming* is a far more indefinite expression than *coming in the flesh*; which restricts the *coming* to the first appearance of the Person in human nature, and is never used concerning John, or any mere creature. The Doctor is chargeable with a fallacy, when he reasons on the ground of the simple term *coming* being understood as if it “ necessarily meant *coming from heaven*.”

He further observes; “ It may also be asserted, with more certainty still, concerning all the apostles, that they pre-existed; for our Saviour, in his prayer for them, respecting their mission, makes use of the term *world*, which is not found in 1 John iv. 2. where he says, John xvii. 18. *As thou hast sent me into the world, so have I also sent them into the world.*” Here the sophism lies in the use of the term *pre-existed*. Our author tacitly assumes, that if the phrase, *sending into the world*, imply a pre-existence of any kind, it must denote a pre-existence of the same kind in both cases. He surely understands this language, with respect to the apostles, as referring to their mission in a public character. When our Lord says, *I have sent them into the world*, it necessarily implies their pre-existence in a different state, as men living in a private station, little known, and not exposed to any peculiar difficulties and dangers, such as they were now to encounter in the fulfilment of their mission. It cannot be pretended that the other expression respects the commencement of our Saviour’s ministry. For Dr P. has quoted it as correspondent with that of *coming in the flesh*. He cannot plead that the phrase, *sent into the world*, must have the same idea affixed to it in both

both clauses, without granting that Jesus as really *sent* the apostles *into the world*, that is, that he as really sent them *in flesh*, or gave them human nature, as the Father sent him *in flesh*, or gave him human nature.

He thinks that “it may be asserted, with more certainty still concerning all the apostles that they pre-existed,” because the term *world* is here used, “which is not found in 1 John iv. 2.” But our author must know that the whole phrase, *sent into the world*, is found in 1 John iv. 9. which, it has been seen, exactly corresponds with the preceding expression, *come in the flesh*.

If we pay the least regard to the meaning of the term *coming*, as used with respect to Christ in other passages of the New Testament, the vanity of our author’s assertions must appear at first view. It is said of *the true Light*, that *he came unto his own*, John i. ii. But this *coming* evidently implies pre-existence. For it is declared concerning the same Person, in the verse immediately preceding, *He was in the world*; that is, he existed in the world, before he came in flesh. If this be not true, what sense can be affixed to these words of Jesus; *I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again I leave the world, and go to the Father?* John xvi. 28. Do they not as clearly signify that he existed with the Father, *before* his coming into the world, as that he should exist with the Father, *after* his leaving it? When this term respects the nativity, it is used in such a sense, that Jesus, *when coming*, or in the very act of entering, *into the world*, could say, *A body hast thou prepared me*, Heb. x. 5.

The true sense of the term must certainly be learned from those prophecies, concerning the appearance of the Messiah, which are recorded in the Old Testament; and in conformity to these must the language of the New be understood. The Jews were accustomed to design the Mes-

iah



ἰαὴν ὁ ἐρχόμενος, *he that cometh*, Matt. xi. 3. They borrowed this language from their scriptures. For there he is sometimes simply described under this character, with a declaration of the certainty of his appearance; as in Hab. ii. 3. Heb. x. 37. *He that cometh shall come*. On other occasions, the dignity of the Person is declared. He is represented as coming with divine Majesty, though in human form: *Behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven*, Dan. vii. 13. His divine nature is often expressly declared: *Behold your God shall come*, Isa. xxxv. 4. This expression evidently denotes a manifestation of himself entirely different from any that his church had formerly enjoyed. It signifies a display of his glory even to the eye of sense. *They shall see the glory of JEHOVAH*, ver. 2. That his people might not deceive themselves, he particularly mentions the signs of his appearance, ver. 5. *Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped, &c.* His work is declared: ver. 4. *He will come and save you*. The conversion of the heathen is metaphorically expressed, as one great effect of his coming: *In the wilderness shall waters break out, &c.* Thus, the whole passage evidently refers to the time of Messiah's appearance.

This manifestation was not to be by means of an inferior person. Therefore it is written, *Say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God. Behold, the Lord God will come,--- Behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him*, chap. xl. 9, 10. This illustrious Person is, in chap. lxii. 11. described in the same characters, only with a change of designation: *Behold, thy salvation cometh: Behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him*. He was immediately to discharge the work of a shepherd, chap. xi. 11. *He shall feed his flock like a shepherd*. He was to be preceded by *the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye*

*ye the way of* JEHOVAH, ver. 3. Here also, we have a prediction of the display of his glory, even to the sensible eye, ver 5. *And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it* ; or, as the words may be read, *all flesh shall see together, that the mouth of the Lord hath spoken*, that is, that JEHOVAH himself is the speaker ; according to chap. lii. 6. formerly explained.

The account given of the Messiah, as *come*, exactly corresponds with these prophecies. God was not manifested in the human person of Jesus ; but *the Son of God was manifested in the flesh*, that is, in the human nature, 1 John iii. 8. The glory that was beheld, was properly his own. It was *the glory as of the only begotten*, John i. 14. When he wrought miracles, he *manifested forth his glory*, chap. ii. 11. When the disciples of John, as sent by their Master, said to Jesus, *Art thou he that should come?* he referred them to these very works which were foretold by the prophet Isaiah, as the signs of the coming of their God : *The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, &c.* Matt. xi. 3—5. His name was called *Jesus*, not because God was to accomplish the work of salvation by him as an inferior agent ; but because he was himself to *save his people*, Matt. i. 21. He is expressly called *Salvation*, Acts xiii. 47. He appropriates to himself the language used with respect to the coming of the church's God and *Salvation* ; *Behold I come,—and my reward is with me* : and to assure her that it was he who was foretold as thus coming, he also appropriates these divine characters which follow in the prophecy of Isaiah (chap. xli. 4.) *I am the First and the Last*, Rev. xxii. 12, 13. If Jesus be not that divine Person who was to *feed his flock like a shepherd*, his followers are chargeable with blasphemy when they call him the *great Shepherd* of the sheep, Heb. xiii. 20. and the *chief Shepherd*, 1 Pet. v. 4.

For



For neither of these characters can apply to him, who is infinitely inferior to another invested with this office.

But in what manner soever that expression, *come in the flesh*, be rendered, the sentence of inspiration condemns Unitarians as well as those who denied the truth of Christ's human nature. For according to the plain meaning of the words, he *came in the flesh*, not only as *Jesus*, but as *Christ*. But those who have held the simple humanity, have always denied this. For they do not believe that *Jesus* was *Christ*, that is, *anointed* to the work of salvation, till thirty years after his *coming in the flesh*.

The Doctor asserts that "there is no trace in this epistle of any more than one heresy." He might as well say, that there is no trace of any more than one *antichrist*. In what sense does John say, chap. ii. 18. that there are *many antichrists*? Whether is it most natural to understand this language of a number of individuals of one heretical class, or of different heresies? If we are to prefer the former sense, these words, ver. 18. *Ye have heard that antichrist shall come*, must respect one person only.

Our author, indeed, is not very consistent with himself, in his account of the design of the inspired writer. For he informs us that "the denial of the human nature of Christ was the only heresy that gave him any alarm." Yet he attempts to prove that he was no less alarmed at the denial of Jesus being the Christ. But these were different heresies, though they had one general name. They were even opposed to each other; so that he, who, in our author's sense, denied that Jesus was the Christ, did so, because he considered Jesus as one Person, and Christ as another.

The Doctor wishes it to appear that John had no respect to Ebionites, in what he says of *false prophets*, *antichrists*, &c. He particularly quotes chap. ii. 22. *Who is a liar*,

but he that denieth that *Jesus* is the *Christ*? understanding these words of the Gnostics, who held that *Christ* was one being, and *Jesus* another\*. But the difference between Gnostics and Ebionites as to the person of *Christ*, was very trifling. Both the early Gnostics and they believed that *Jesus* was a mere man. Both denied the miraculous conception. Both held that there was nothing supernatural about *Jesus*, till after his baptism. They agreed in asserting that then the *Christ* descended upon him, in the form of a dove. By this name the Gnostics called the Spirit †. Both believed that this descent was the only source of the miraculous powers of *Jesus*. Both denied a personal union between the *Logos* and the human nature. Modern Unitarians wish it to be believed, that their predecessors considered the *Logos* or *Spirit*, as a mere power or attribute. But we shall afterwards shew that they, as really as the Gnostics, believed that the *Christ* pre-existed. It has been generally thought that the Ebionites extended the name *Christ* to the man *Jesus*, whereas the Gnostics did not. But this opinion seems to have been formed merely from the silence of ancient writers; as the principles of the Ebionites have not been so fully explained as those of the Gnostics. Let us, however, suppose it to be true that they differed in this respect, can it thence be rationally inferred that the latter were accounted heretics, while the former, notwithstanding their conformity in other respects, passed for genuine Christians? The Gnostics believed in him, whom they thus described, as the true Messiah. It is, therefore, inconceivable that John should condemn the one, and justify the other; that he should rest the truth of a profession of Christianity on so slight a difference.

It is far more natural to think that these words, *Who is*

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\* Ibid. p. 199.

† Epiphani Haer. 28. sect. i. p. 110. Haer. 30. sect. xiv. p. 138.



*a liar*, &c. respect the denial of such a Christ as had been promised. Now, what was the great character of this Messiah? Was it, that at his baptism the Spirit should rest upon him, in which both Gnostics and Ebionites agreed? This was the least part of his qualification. The apostle explains his meaning in the words immediately following, shewing that he especially referred to the essence of this Person. *He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.* Was the Gnostic an *antichrist*, because he did not extend the name *Christ* to the man Jesus? And did the Ebionite deserve a better name, who denied that Jesus had any natural father but Joseph? Such a denial of the *Christ*, or *Messiah*, is evidently meant, as implies a rejection of the first Person in the character of a Father, and of the second in that of a Son.

But the Doctor has discovered, that even the language used with respect to the sonship of Christ refers to Gnostics: As they “maintained,” he says, “that *Jesus* and the *Christ* “were different persons, the latter having come from heaven, and being the Son of God, whereas Jesus was the “Son of man only, the expression of *Jesus being the Son of “God* is as directly opposed to the doctrine of the Gnostics “as that of *Christ coming in the flesh* \*.” This is a strange effort of sophistry. The Gnostics believed that *Jesus was the Son of man only*. Therefore, John could not mean to include Ebionites. They believed, forsooth, that Jesus was the Son of God. But in what sense? Did they say that God was *his own Father*? That he was so *a Son born*, as to be *the mighty God*? Nothing of this kind is meant. They believed that he was *the Son of God*, because he was *the Christ*. For our author asserts that these are equivalent expressions †.

There is an evident fallacy in his use of that expression,

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\* Ibid. p 195.

† P. 200.

*the Son of God.* From the peculiar structure of the sentence, a stranger to Unitarian principles would suppose, that our author meant that John had extended this language to *Jesus*, in the same sense in which the Gnostics confined it to *Christ*. Now, he tells us that they considered the *Christ* as “having come from heaven,” referring to the sense in which they understood the term, *Son of God*, as expressive of a divine nature. But when he introduces the same term, as extended to *Jesus*, according to that view which he is pleased to ascribe to the apostle, he totally changes the sense. It signifies nothing more than what belongs to a mere man, to one who never “came from heaven.” As the “Gnostics maintained that *Jesus* and *Christ* were different persons,” they could not consistently call *Jesus the Son of God*, or say that he “had come from heaven.” Therefore, they were *false prophets, liars, heretics, antichrists*. But how do Unitarians avoid the same characters? They give the compliment of the name to *Jesus Christ*; but deny that he is truly the Son of God, or that he “came from heaven,” either as *Jesus*, or as *Christ*. They do not, like these heretics the Gnostics, believe that *Jesus only is the Son of man*. In that very sense in which the Gnostics used this term, they believe nothing more concerning *Jesus Christ*.

It is very evident that, in the passage last quoted (chap. ii. 22.) the weight of the apostle’s accusation lies in this, that the heretics alluded to, denied an essential relation between the Father and the Son. They so denied the Son, as to exclude themselves from any interest in the Father. Therefore it is added, ver. 23. *Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father*. But the denial of the divine nature of Christ is a direct attack on the Father, personally and paternally viewed. For he is a Father, in a proper sense, solely in relation to his only-begotten Son.



That the apostle here especially refers to the pre-existence and deity of the Son, without which he could not be the *Christ*, appears in the clearest manner from what follows. It is immediately added; *Let that, therefore, abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father*, ver. 24. He exhorts them to continue in that doctrine which they had *heard from the beginning*. He seems to point out the nature of this doctrine, by an allusion to the very terms in which he had expressed it in his introduction: *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, &c.* Allusions of this kind, even where the sense of the terms is varied, are very common with Hebrew writers. Having given the designation of *eternal life* to the Person whom he had thus described, he alludes to this very designation, by declaring the effect of their continuance in the doctrine concerning him; *And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life*, ver. 25. He then says; *These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you*, ver. 26. to shew that the seducers, whom he had chiefly in his eye, were such as denied that the Son was *that eternal life which was with the Father*.

In the prosecution of the same design, after declaring their security for *abiding in him*, as the object of their faith, and exhorting them to the exercise of this grace, he breaks out in the language of admiration at the great honour conferred on Christians, in consequence of their union to a divine Person. *Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the sons of God! Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is,*

chap. iii. 1, 2. When believers are said to be the sons of God, the same divine Person is meant, whom *the world did not know*, who *shall appear*, and whom they shall *see as he is*. There can be no doubt that the Son is meant; especially as it is he who is said to *appear*, chap. ii. 28. and they who do righteousness are said to be *born*, or *begotten of him*, ver. 29. They are the sons of God,—*who was manifested to take away our sins*, ver. 5. *who laid down his life for us*, ver. 16.

He also declares that Jesus is so the *Christ*, as to communicate his *unction* to others; not in the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit alone, but in those which are saving, and which are the privilege of all true believers, preserving them from destructive errors, chap. ii. 20. 27. Therefore, when the apostle speaks of denying that Jesus is *the Christ*, he means a rejection of him as a divine Person, who had power to take away our sins meritoriously, by laying down his life for us; and efficaciously, by communicating to us his Spirit.

Dr P. thinks that the passage, which we have last considered, “may explain what Peter meant by *denying the Lord that bought them*, 2 Epist. ii. 1. as it may be supposed “that he meant denying *Jesus* to be the *Christ* \*.” But the mode of expression evidently implies that it was such a denial of Christ as affected the truth of his *purchase*. It is granted that the Gnostic doctrine terminated in this. For as they asserted that, at the time of the suffering of Jesus, the Christ left him, and ascended into heaven, it necessarily follows that he had not power to pay the price of our redemption. But did not those, equally, at least, *deny the Lord that bought them*, who denied that Jesus Christ was ever more than man, and that he had any power, or indeed, any design to purchase the church?

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\* Ibid. p. 200.



He also quotes 1 John v. 5. *Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?* The apostle expresses himself differently, ver. 1. *Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God.* These expressions our author accounts equivalent. But the faith here described is not a faith merely respecting his mission, but directly terminating upon his Person. It hath Christ for its proper object. It is *believing on the Son of God*, ver. 10. for *eternal life*, ver. 11. a faith apprehending this life in the Son, as what can be had in him only, ver. 12. It is *believing on the name of the Son of God*, ver. 13. It is a confidence in him as the object, and the hearer, of prayer, as one whose will must regulate all our petitions, and who in a sovereign manner grants them when thus regulated. *And this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us. And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him*, ver. 14, 15. If Jesus be not the Son of God, as having the same nature with his Father, and yet the object of such a faith; while a plurality of persons is discarded, creature-worship is introduced.

The faith meant as effectually excludes Unitarians, as it did Gnostics. For one great design of this epistle is to declare the work of the Son of God. Were it true that the apostle had laboured so much to prove the truth of his humanity, would he have done it without any proper end? Our Lord assumed real human nature, that in this he might obey and satisfy for us. Indeed, the doctrine of atonement runs through the whole of this epistle. The apostle testifies that *the blood of Jesus Christ his (God's) Son, cleanseth us from all sin*, or, to read it more elegantly, according to the Socinian view, *The blood of Jesus Christ the Christ cleanseth us*, &c. chap. i. 7. He proclaims him *the propitiation for our sins*, and on this foundation as the *advocate*, chap. ii. 1, 2.

Thence, also, he declares *the forgiveness* of sins for *his name's sake*, ver. 12. He testifies, ~~as~~ has been seen, that God was manifested for *taking away our sins*, chap. iii. 5. and that he *gave his life for us*, or *in our stead*, ver. 16. Did God give his only-begotten Son? It was *that we might live through him*, that he might *be the propitiation for our sins, the Saviour of the world*, chap. iv. 9, 10. 14.

When the apostle asserts that Jesus *came by water and blood*, chap. v. 6. it undoubtedly implies that he came in real flesh. But this is asserted only in subserviency to the great end of his assuming our nature. The language seems to be of the same import with that which John uses in his Gospel, chap. xix. 34. But why such particularity, if merely to assure us of the truth of the human nature, especially as it does not seem to have been denied by many of the Gnostics when this epistle was written? But by the use of this language he shews, that the ceremonial law had its completion in Christ, and that we receive both pardon and sanctification through him. Thus he testifies that *the fountain* was really *opened for sin, and for uncleanness*. If we can believe that the water and blood, by which Christ came, were meant merely to prove the truth of his humanity, we become Gnostics indeed. We suppose the God of the Jews to have been an evil being, who oppressed his people with an intolerable yoke of bondage, without any advantage, either to themselves, or to us; who afflicted them, not for their *profit*, but for his *pleasure*.

If it be supposed that *the water* respects the baptism of Christ, the doctrine has the same tendency. The Gnostics in some sense granted that *the Son of God came by water*; as they said that the *Logos* descended on the man Jesus at his baptism. But, even in that early age, they denied that *the Son of God came by blood*. For they asserted that the *Logos* left Jesus, when he was about to suffer. But according



ding to the apostle, he *came*, not only as *the Christ*, as one *anointed*, but as *Jesus*, who should, by his death, *save his people from their sins*. He says of *the Spirit, the water, and the blood*, that as witnesses *they agree in one*, ver. 8. because they all testify that *eternal life is in the Son of God*. The *water*, or his baptism, *bears witness*, because it shews his divine call to the work of salvation. The *blood* does the same. For it testifies the truth of his purchase of this blessing; as thereby it appears that *he laid down his life for us*, chap. iii. 16. The Spirit agrees with both. For he applies the blood of Christ to the soul, and witnesses within believers that they are the sons of God, making them to *know that they have eternal life*, ver. 13. Therefore, the apostle says, *He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself*, ver. 10. But his doctrine opposes Unitarians, ancient and modern, as directly as Gnostics; because of their denying the efficacy of his death.

The deity of the Word is expressly declared ver. 7. But I shall not enter on the proof from this verse; as the various objections to its authenticity would lead me into too wide a field of controversy \*.

When the apostle sums up this epistle, he thus expresses the great design of it: *These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God*, ver. 13. Those to whom he wrote already *believed on the name of the Son of God*. They did not merely receive the testimony which he gave. But they relied *on* him, personally considered, as a sure ground of confidence for salvation. Nor was this all. They believed that he was the proper Son of God, and relied *on* him in this character. For *believing on the name* undoubtedly de-

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\* See Martin's Critical Dissertation on this verse, and his reply to Emlyn.

notes the particular respect that faith has to its object, according to the *denomination* particularly specified.

But as John had previously declared that they were exposed to danger from *seducers*, the manner in which he expresses his design in writing points out the nature of that heretical doctrine which gave him most alarm. He wrote *that they might know that they had eternal life*. This clearly implies that the doctrine of the *seducers*, whom he opposed, tended to deprive them of this 'great and comprehensive blessing. It cannot be supposed, that he refers to any who directly denied the eternal state. Even the Gnostics, who disbelieved the resurrection of the body, acknowledged the eternal existence of the soul. Therefore, they could no more be said to deny *eternal life*, than those in our day who, going to the other extreme, believe the eternal existence of the body alone. The apostle certainly refers to the natural consequence of the doctrine of those heretics whom he has in his eye. The connexion of the different parts of the verse, and of the whole with the context, nay, with the general tenor of the epistle, determines the nature of their great and leading error. They denied that Jesus Christ was *the Son of God*, that is, that he was *that eternal life which was with the Father*. They represented him as a mere man, who, therefore, could have neither power nor right to communicate *eternal life* to others, because he needed to receive this blessing for himself. They also denied the merit of his sufferings, and the whole design of his *coming by water and blood*.

How might these Christians *know that they had eternal life*? The apostle shews that this *knowledge* naturally flows from faith *on the Son of God*. For he had said immediately before; *This life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life*, ver. 11, 12. They had the Son as the object of their faith. They were united to him, as Godman. Therefore, they



they might be assured that they had eternal life ; because it is *in* him, he being essentially the fountain of life, and thence infinitely fit to be the repository of it, as Mediator, in consequence of purchasing it by his blood. Thus, if we allow the inspired apostle himself to declare his design in writing, we may be assured that it was especially to establish Christians in the faith of these two great doctrines, which Unitarians have still denied, the Deity of Christ, and a real Atonement for sin, as including the purchase of eternal life.

He adds ; *And that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God*, assigning this as another reason for writing. Though they already believed, his writing was not, in this respect, vain labour. For as they could only be assured of eternal life, in consequence of believing in Christ as *the Son of God*, or a divine Person ; he shews that their continued interest in that blessing was inseparably connected with perseverance in this very faith. They were still to rely *on the Son of God*. It was also his design to confirm their faith in this respect. The connexion between these two, *that ye may know*, and *that ye may believe*, shews that the degree of their assurance as to an interest in eternal life would be in proportion to the strength of their faith in Christ as *the Son of God*, and reliance on him in this character. For the more firmly that this great doctrine is *believed with the heart*, the more certain we are of the security of our foundation for eternity. Therefore, as they already considered the Son of God as the object of prayer, he proceeds to urge the necessity of assurance as to the enjoyment of all these blessings *asked* of him, *according to his will*, ver. 14, 15. To encourage them still more to persevere, and to make progress in this faith, he declares that their prayers for eternal life, even in behalf of others, would be heard and answered by Christ ; if these were the fruit

fruit of confidence in him as *the Son of God*, ver. 16. *If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death.*

What he has observed with respect to this sin, leads him to speak of that *which is unto death*. Then he declares his own assurance, and that of his brethren, as to preservation from this sin; their assurance of a spiritual birth, as opposed to the miserable state of the world; and finally, returning to his principal subject, he declares their assurance with respect to the coming of the Son of God in our nature, and an interest in him, compendiously expressing the substance of that doctrine which he has delivered concerning him, in the preceding part of the epistle; *And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding that we may know him that is true; and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life*, ver. 20. The first expression in which we have the word *αληθινος*, *true*, seems to refer to the Father. The second may be understood of the Son, as well as the last proposition in the verse. Socinians, indeed, apply the whole to the Father. They plead that the position of the article before the words *true God*, shews that he is meant to whom the name most perfectly belongs \*. But that this name does not as perfectly belong to the Son as to the Father, they have yet to prove. It is well known, however, that the use of the article, in conjunction with the word *Θεός* *God*, is no certain argument. It is sometimes thus used to denote the false deities of the heathen, Acts vii. 43. xiv. 11, &c. Sometimes, the true God is mentioned without the article, Matt. iv. 4. v. 9. Sometimes, the name is given to Christ with the article, Tit. ii.

\* Volkel. lib. v. c. 10.



13. Heb. i. 8. Socinus himself acknowledges that this rule is not universal in the Greek language.

Here we have the demonstrative pronoun *αυτος* *this*; the proper use of which is to point out what is present, either to the senses, or to the mind. It does not, indeed, invariably refer to what is last mentioned, but sometimes to the principal subject of discourse. But when the principal subject is that last mentioned, there can be no doubt as to the reference of the demonstrative. Now, Christ is not only the subject immediately mentioned, but that of the whole epistle \*.

The Socinian view charges the apostle with the most unmeaning tautology. For he is not only supposed to give the Father the denomination of *true* in the two preceding clauses, but to repeat it a third time. As the truth of his deity is said to be still meant, the third declaration must be equivalent to an assertion, that “the true God is the true God.” For *αυτος* always respects its subject according to the description preceding.

But Socinians not only attempt to tear away the demonstrative from its proper and natural subject, but entirely to change the sense of the preposition *εν*. They cannot refuse that these words, “We are *in* him that is true,” are properly translated. But because the Saviour hath too much honour, if the same preposition bear this sense in the following clause, they contend that it should be rendered *by*; as signifying that we are united to the true God by his Son †. This preposition is used, in the New Testament, in the sense of *δια* *by*, in two or three places. But it never occurs in two different senses in the same passage; and as far as we can observe, it is never used in this sense by John. It would certainly have been the most improper occasion

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\* Vid. Bisterfeld cont. Crell. p. 5.

† Famil. Illustr. p. 32.

he could have chosen for using a term, which could not express his meaning, unless its ordinary and proper sense were rejected, when guarding those to whom he wrote against idolatry, and according to Socinians, exclusively asserting the deity of the Father. For, if here understood in its natural sense, it certainly denotes that believers are in the Son, in the same respects in which they are in the Father.

But as they cannot, by all their attempts on this passage itself, sufficiently obscure the evidence arising from it, they find it necessary to call in another, as an auxiliary. Thus Dr P. says that this language “ may be considered as an allusion to the words of Christ addressed to the Father, and recorded by this very apostle, John xvii. 3. *This is life eternal that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent* \*.” This exception hath been often answered. But our author does not take the least notice of any thing that has been offered in reply.

The very scripture introduced to prove the exclusion of Jesus from the character here given him, defeats the design of its introduction. For it shews that *eternal life* does not consist in the knowledge of the Father only. Therefore, this, as a personal designation, cannot, in the epistle, be meant exclusively of him. Socinus himself was sensible of this. Therefore he applies it to the Son †.

It is also evident, from the handle now made of this text, that Socinians have changed their ideas of Deity. For the Polish divines, while they said that the true God was here opposed to idols, acknowledged that Christ was a true, and not an imaginary God ‡. According to this doctrine, there must either be more true Gods than one ; or Christ must be one

\* Ibid. p. 33.

† Respons. ad Bujek. cap. 8.

‡ Non diffitemur quidem, Christum verum et nequaquam imaginarium Deum esse. Volkel. l. 5. c. 10. p. 423. ap. Hoornbeck Socin. Confut. vol. ii. p. 86.



one with the Father But their successors deny the Deity of the Son in every sense of the word. What, then, can we think of a faith that changes the very object of worship in the course of a century or two?

Dr P. adds: "Without this interpretation, these two texts would flatly contradict one another; for how can the Father be *the only true God*, if the Son be true God also \*?" But even supposing that John refers to the Son, he does not speak of a *true God* different from him whom Jesus addresses in this character; but of him who is essentially the same. For our Lord says; *I am not alone; but I and the Father that sent me*, John viii. 16. *He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father. Believe me, that I am in the Father, and the Father in me*, chap. xiv. 9. 11. It is evident that our Lord, in his intercessory prayer, does not contrast himself with the Father, as if he had no claim to the character of *the only true God*. For by the same rule of interpretation, it might be denied that the Father is omniscient, because it is said that the Son *had a name that no one knew but he himself*, Rev. xix. 12.

It must also be observed that the character *only* does not belong to the subject *thee*, but to the predicate *true God*. For the article *τον* precedes *μονον*, distinguishing the subject from the predicate. Thus the expression does not signify that *the Father only* is *the true God*, but that *the Father* is *the only true God*; not as opposed to the Son, but to all false deities †. But it deserves our attention, that the Socinians, in all their cavils at particular passages, as understood of the deity of Christ, proceed on a *petitio principii*, by still taking it for granted that there cannot be a plurality of persons, without a plurality of gods. Thence they assume it as unquestionable, that the Son cannot be called *the only true God*, without denying this character to the Father.

But

\* Fam. Illustr. *ibid*.

† Vid. Lampe in loc.

But even according to their own exposition of the language of John, they leave too much to Christ, for a mere man; when they grant that he *gives an understanding that we may know him that is true*. For this does not merely, or even principally, signify a communication of the outward means of light; but of real internal light. For this is opposed to the understanding as *darkened*, Eph. iv. 18. where the same word (*διανοία*) is used. It is distinct from, and subsequent to, the work of the Spirit, as giving outward revelation, Eph. i. 18. For how great soever *the light*, without this *the darkness* will not comprehend it, John, i. 5. God alone can give this *understanding*, Eph. i. 18, 19. Heb. viii. 10. x. 16. It is *God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, who shines in our hearts*, 2 Cor. iv. 6.

They also grant that Jesus *gives eternal life*, according to John xvii. 2. If so, he gives God himself. For *the true God is eternal life*. But can a mere creature have the true God at his disposal?

But however inconsistent Unitarians are, we may be assured that the inspired writer is consistent with himself. Dr P. cannot refuse that, in his introduction, he gives the character, *Eternal Life*, to the Son. And shall we suppose that he robs him of it, in the conclusion. This would, indeed, be a striking instance of the art of sinking. But the apostle carries his original idea through the epistle. Thus he says, chap. ii. 13. *I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning*. He repeats the same great truth, ver. 14. to impress it more deeply. There can be no doubt that he alludes to what he had said in his introduction. For he adds another character which he had there given of the same glorious Person; *I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the Logos of God abideth in you*. In ver. 20. he calls him *the Holy One*. But this is a peculiar designation of the true God. In chap.



iii. 24. he shews that the Son of God *abideth in him that keepeth his commandments*, and that it belongs to him to give the Spirit.

The apostle concludes his epistle with these words, *Little children, keep yourselves from idols*. As the true God is here opposed to *idols*, it hath been objected that “we have no instance of this with respect to Christ.” Though this were true, it would not prove that he is not God. But the assertion is contrary to fact. For in 1 Cor. viii. 6. he is opposed, equally with the Father, to idols: *To us there is but one God the Father,—and one Lord Jesus Christ*. Here the apostle is directly treating of false gods. These words, Heb. i. 6. *Let all the angels of God worship him*, are generally supposed to be taken from Psal. xcvi. 7. *Worship him all ye gods*. There, the object of worship is directly opposed to *graven images and idols*.

It seems to be generally thought that Cerinthus was contemporary with the apostles. Theodoret has asserted that this heretic urged the worship of angels \*: and it has been supposed that Paul opposes his doctrine, Col. ii. 18. Mosheim says that Cerinthus required of his followers, that they should worship the Supreme God in conjunction with the Son †. He does not give his authority for this assertion. But it is probable, from what has been ascribed to this heretic, with respect to the worship of angels. As he undoubtedly considered the Son as inferior to the Father, John might add this exhortation, because those who worshipped Christ, but not as God supreme, really made him an idol. By connecting this exhortation with a declaration of the true Deity of Christ, he shews that he is the object of worship on this foundation only. In this view, his exhortation seems far more natural, than when understood as directed against idol-worship in general, or against the Nicolaitans, who ur-

\* Comment. in Epist. Paulin. p. 355. ap. Ittig. de Hæres. p. 52.

† Hist. Cent. 1. part ii. c. 5. vol. i. p. 145.

ged the eating of idolothytes. For he does not once refer to either of these in the preceding part of the epistle.

I shall only add, that I am much inclined to think that the apostle, in the use of the word *αληθινος* *true*, ver. 20. primarily refers to the *truth or faithfulness* of God, as bearing witness concerning his Son. It cannot be refused that a considerable part of the chapter relates to this. The apostle, when speaking of the testimony of the Spirit, ver. 6. had asserted that he is *αληθεια* *truth*. He had spoken of *the witness of God* as *greater* than that of man, ver. 9. and declared the heinous iniquity of those who reject it, ver. 10. *He that believeth not God hath made him a liar*. He had particularly declared the great subject of this testimony, ver. 11. *This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son*. As in ver. 20. he speaks of *the Son* as *eternal life*, it is very natural to think that he would allude to his attestation in this character. This verse, indeed, seems to be a compend of all that he has said directly on the subject, from the fifth verse downward; of the *coming of the Son of God*, ver. 5, 6. of the *veracity* of God the Father as a witness, ver. 9—11. of the *union* of believers to Christ, ver. 12. of his *Deity*, as he is the object of faith and of prayer, ver. 13.—15. and of *eternal life* as *in* him, and dispensed *by* him, ver. 11, 12, 13. 16. Thus, the apostle shews whence some believe the divine record, while others reject it, *making God a liar*. *The Son hath given them an understanding that they may know him that is true*, that is, that they may know God as *faithful*. By this gift, he unites them to himself, as infinitely worthy of their trust. *And we are in him that is true, in his Son Jesus Christ*. The character *αληθινος* *true*, is familiar with this inspired writer, as denoting the Son. It occurs in the same form as here, without any substantive, Rev. iii. 7. *He that is true*; and chap. xix. 11. *He is called faithful and true*; and he is so called



called as *The Word of God*, ver. 13. The apostle, having ascribed to the Son that *truth* which, in this place, is evidently appropriated to God as an essential perfection, makes a natural transition to the universal *truth* of his essence as God. He does not change his idea. He only extends it. For the veracity of God in a federal character flows from the truth of his essence. It is because he is God, that he *changes not*, that he *cannot lie*. The security of those who are *in* the Son, with respect to *eternal life*, is at the same time declared. *This is the true God, and eternal life.*

This view of the passage affords a strong collateral proof of the authenticity of the seventh verse. For the veracity of the Spirit, as a witness, having been already declared, we have here a declaration of the veracity of the Father, and of the Word. Thus, we have a particular attestation of the faithfulness of each of *the Three that bear record in heaven.*

### C H A P. III.

*Additional Evidence, from the New Testament, of Christ being the Logos.*

AS a proof of the justness of that view which has been given of the term *Logos*, it may not be improper to mention some other passages of the New Testament, in which it evidently occurs in the same sense. John, undoubtedly, had a peculiar pleasure in the use of this term. For, not to mention some other places, where, as some apprehend, he uses it as a personal character, there is one, the application of which adversaries themselves cannot deny. This is Rev. xix. 12, 13.

They consider it as an easy matter to understand the meaning of this name. But the Spirit of God certainly leaves it as a mystery. *He had a name written that no one knew but he himself.* Is this name unknown as to the very expression? It will not be said that this is meant. For the divine expresses it in the next verse, *His name is called, The Word of God.* How, then, is it unknown? Undoubtedly, as to its full import, and the mystery contained in it. For it may be understood as referring to his ineffable generation, to his being in the Father, and also to his official character, as he is both the Father's Counsellor, and his Interpreter. In whichever of these lights it be viewed, it exceeds our comprehension. There seems to be an allusion to the reply given by this illustrious Person to Manoah; *Wherefore askest thou after my Name, seeing it is wonderful?* Judg. xiii. 18. Some apprehend that there is also a reference to the words of Agur, Prov. xxx. 4. *What is his Name, and what is his Son's Name, if thou canst tell\*?* Socinians, indeed, evidently think far more of their wisdom, than Agur did of his. For they are not at a loss to tell the full import of the Name of the Son and Word of God.

It deserves our notice, however, that Dr P. in another work, makes the following acknowledgment: "The reason why John calls Christ *the Word of God*, was probably his seeing that name or title written upon his thigh, in the Revelation, which is supposed to have been written before his Gospel †." He is here speaking of the introduction to the Gospel. When these *illustrations* were published, he preferred the other sense of the term *Logos*, as denoting an attribute. But he was not so fully satisfied that it could bear this sense only. Else, why did he give a reason, which appeared to him *probable*, for its being used as a personal character? He also says, "Christ being called  
" *the*

\* Vid. Vitring. in Apoc. xix. 12.

† Famil. Illustr. p. 32.



“ *the Word of God*, on account of his being in a more eminent manner commissioned to declare the will of God, they (some Christians in John’s time) imagined that he was meant in many passages of the Old Testament, in which mention is made of the *Word of God*.” For he acknowledges, that it is “ an opinion which is known to have prevailed in his time, that the Spirit which animated Christ, having pre-existed, was that Being who formed this world \*.”

Here are several important concessions : First, that it was an opinion which prevailed in the time of John, that Christ pre-existed : Secondly, that those who embraced this opinion believed that, in many passages of the Old Testament, he was called the *Word* : Thirdly, that he certainly bears this name in the New Testament : and that John gave him this name, *probably* because he, in the Revelation, saw it written on his thigh. Now did we use the same freedom with *probability*, which our author often does, we would deduce from it *certain* conclusions. And it would naturally occur ; First, that the use of this term by John, as a personal character, was a confirmation of that prevailing opinion ; Secondly, that he would use it in no other sense than that in which it was revealed to him, as sustained by his Lord, that is, as a personal name.

The Doctor however says ; “ In contradistinction to all this, the apostle here asserts, that by the *Word of God*, we are not to understand any Being distinct from God.” What believer in the Trinity ever supposed this? *The dream be to them that hate our Lord, and the interpretation to his enemies !* But Socinians still falsely assume, that a distinction of persons necessarily implies a diversity of being. With them, this is equivalent to the idea of a person distinct from the Father. But if it was John’s design to shew that the Word was only an attribute, there was not merely a

*contradistinction* to that “opinion which is known to have prevailed,” but a *contradiction* to that Revelation with which he was himself favoured. If the Revelation was written before the Gospel, how did that which was a Person, when the former was penned, dwindle into a mere attribute before the date of the latter?

But John is not the only inspired writer, in the New Testament, who gives this name to Christ. Luke speaks of those who *from the beginning were eye-witnesses, and ministers of the Word*, chap. i. 2. In calling them *eye-witnesses*, he has evidently the same meaning as John, when he says; *That which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon,—of the Word of life*, &c. 1 Epist. i. 1. How could they be *eye-witnesses* of the Word, or *look upon* it, as preached? The term *υπηρεται*, rendered *ministers*, necessarily supposes a personal character in construction with it; according to its constant use in the New Testament, referring to the superior who is served, and not to the thing about which their service is engaged.

In this sense also it seems to be used by Paul, as his language is recorded by the same inspired writer, Acts xx. 32. *Now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the Word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them who are sanctified*. This language may be viewed as denoting Christ. For he is joined with God, that is, the Father, in a certain external operation. It properly belongs to a Person, to build up, and to give an inheritance. The use of the term *παρατιθεμαι* favours this sense. It denotes the commitment or commendation of a person or thing to the care of another; as it is used, Luke xxiii. 46. Acts xiv. 23. 1 Pet. iv. 19. The Gospel is said to be *commended* or *committed* to men, 2 Tim. ii. 2. but nowhere else are men said to be *commended* to it. Christ may well be called *the Word of the grace of God*. For as *the Word made flesh*, he is full of grace.



Various reasons have been given by learned interpreters, for understanding the inspired writer to the Hebrews as speaking of Christ, under the character of *the Word of God*. chap. iv. 12, 13. They have argued from his aim in this epistle, which was, as far as he lawfully could, to accommodate himself to the ideas and modes of expression common amongst those to whom he wrote. They have also urged his special design in introducing the *Logos* here, in what sense soever it be understood. He evidently means to alarm those to whom he addresses himself, and, according to the general scope of the epistle, to illustrate the unspeakable danger of rejecting or departing from Jesus Christ, whom he, in the preceding chapter, calls *the living God*. Now, the propriety of introducing the character under consideration, appears from the use of it elsewhere. For Christ is thus denominated, in relation to the judgment which he executes on the enemies of the Gospel. For when his name is declared to be *The Word of God*, he appears *clothed in a vesture dipped in blood, and out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations*, Rev. xix. 13. 15.

The connexion confirms this view. A Person is referred to, ver. 13. *Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight : but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do*. That the Person referred to is Christ, appears from the last words of this verse, *προς ον ημιν ο λογος*. If, with some translators, we render the expression, *of whom our discourse is*; they can be understood of him only. For he is the great subject of the epistle. If, according to our version; the inference is the same. If we understand them as respecting the present state, they must relate to him. For *all power is given unto him in heaven, and in earth*; and he is the immediate object of our faith. If we view them as referring to judgment, and render them, *to whom we must give an account*, which many

reckon the proper translation ; still they peculiarly respect him. For *the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son*. Besides, the relative *his* is closely connected with *The Word of God* as its antecedent : and it is unnatural to apply it to any other. Thus the Word is said to be *a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart*, because *there is not any creature that is not manifest in his sight*. The inference in ver. 14. *Seeing, then, that we have a great High Priest, &c.* is thought to confirm this view ; as the argument would be weakened by the introduction of a subject essentially different.

The attributes of this Word are strictly applicable to Christ. It is ζων, *living*. This cannot properly be said of the word of revelation itself, which is only the mean of the communication of life. But Jesus claims this character. *I am, o ζων, the living One*, Rev. i. 18. He is *the Word of life*, 1 John i. 1. a character which Dr P. himself can apply to no other. We have seen that no other can be meant, when it is said *In him was life*.

This Word is ενεργης, *powerful*. The expression unquestionably applies with far more propriety to the source of divine energy, than to the mere instrument of its conveyance. The same Word is *sharper, or more penetrating than any two-edged sword*. It has been seen that this very idea is introduced in the description of him whose name is called, *The Word of God*, Rev. xix. 13. 15. *Out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword*. Nay, Christ appropriates this character to himself, Isa. xlix. 2. *He hath made my mouth like a sharp sword, and made me a polished shaft*. This Word is *a discerner of the thoughts, &c.* This is elsewhere expressly asserted of Christ. *He knew what was in man*. He declares concerning himself ; *All the churches shall know that I am he who searcheth the reins and hearts*, Rev. ii. 23 \*.

C H A P.

\* Vid. Owen in loc. Classii Philol. l. 1. t. 4. f. 3.



## C H A P. IV.

*The Divinity of Christ proved from the three first Gospels.*

OUR author, in his historical works, gives himself no trouble with the multiplied proofs of the Divinity of our Saviour, produced from the Gospel-history. With a single touch of his *besom of destruction*, he sweeps them all away ; as if no one would ever dare to offer any proofs of this doctrine from the Gospels, or so much as look into them for this purpose, after he has told them that none are to be found there. “ Jesus Christ,” he says,—“ made no other pretensions,” than that he was a mere man, “ referring all his extraordinary power to God his Father :—and it is most evident that the apostles, and all those who conversed with our Lord, before and after his resurrection, considered him in no other light than simply as a man approved of God by signs and wonders which God did by him \*.” —“ If we look into the Gospel-history, we shall find that all that our Saviour himself taught, or insinuated, were his divine mission in general, or his being the Messiah in particular, with the doctrine of the resurrection, and that of himself coming again to raise and judge the world.—He never told the disciples, that he had pre-existed, or that he had any thing to do before he came into the world †.” Again he says, “ If we look into the Gospels and the book of Acts, we shall find that those *sublime doctrines* (of the pre-existence and divinity of Christ) as they (the Fathers) call them, were not taught in an early period. For none of the three first Gospels make the  
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\* Hist. of Cor. vol. i. p. 2.

† Hist. Earl. Op. vol. iii. p. 64.

“least mention of any thing in the person or nature of Christ, superior to those of other men \*.”

The supposed silence of the three first Evangelists, and of our Saviour himself, on the head of the Divine nature, constitutes the foundation of two of the chief *arguments* urged by Dr P. *against the divinity and pre-existence of Christ* †.

We might well be filled with astonishment at the audacity of these assertions, were not admiration itself incapable of any further exertion, with respect to men who have already gone the length of denying the Lord who bought us. But as we are not disposed implicitly to receive the Doctor's determinations, we shall inquire, what evidences of the divinity of Christ occur in the testimonies given by the Evangelists? and also consider his own testimony to this purpose, as recorded by them.

Our author especially fixes on the *three first Gospels*, as not “making the *least mention of any thing*, in the person “or nature of Christ, superior to those of other men :” and these, indeed, have not generally been viewed as containing much evidence in support of this doctrine. Therefore, they demand our particular attention. To avoid repetition, we shall view them in connexion.

It is granted, that the primary design, both of our Lord, and of his ministers, was to prove his divine mission, as the promised Messiah. This appears, not only from his discourses, but from the distinct testimonies given by the Evangelists. For, this point being once established, true faith would necessarily infer, that Jesus was just such a Saviour as the prophets foretold; a divine Person, *Immanuel*, JEHOVAH, JEHOVAH *our righteousness*, JEHOVAH-ROPHI, JEHOVAH *of hosts*, &c. With no propriety could he have been acknowledged

\* Earl. Opin. vol. iii. p. 158, 159.

† Earl. Opin. vol. i. p. 10. 12. 22.



ledged as the promised Messiah, had he not produced the most decisive evidences of divinity. For the prophets had used such language, as to exclude every one, but a divine Person, from any claim to that character. Accordingly, the very same circumstances which proved that he was Messiah, incontestably proved that he was *God over all*. For, although he acted in concurrence with the Father and Spirit, he nevertheless acted by his own power. Therefore, he expressly informs his hearers that he could have no claim to be received as Messiah, unless he performed works properly divine. John x. 37. *If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not.* But besides these evidences of divinity that arise from his character as Messiah, even the three first Gospels afford a variety of others, of a distinct nature, sufficient to satisfy faith.

Jesus is described as *Immanuel*, or *God with us*, Mat. i. 23. and the Evangelists were not acquainted with such refinement of speech, as to suppose that this should mean *a mere man with us*, however remarkably he might be distinguished by his holiness. Socinians have not yet disproved the authenticity of this passage; though their batteries have been pointed against it for many centuries. Dr P. himself, in one of his treatises, grants that it is authentic; though, since the publication of that work, he has clearly renounced the doctrine of the miraculous conception, as having “too much the air of *fable*,” as “an inconsistent and ill-digested story\*.” But this only verifies what is written concerning some, that they *wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived*†. Indeed, he makes such a handle of the doctrine, while pretending to acknowledge the authenticity of the passage, that perhaps it was the fairest way to reject it entirely. In his *Familiar Illustrations*, speaking of the name *Immanuel*, he says; “If  
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\* Earl. Opin. vol. iv. p. 120. 123.

† 2 Tim. iii. 13.

“ we consider other instances of names imposed by the di-  
 “ vine direction in the scriptures, we shall find that they  
 “ do not always express any thing characteristic of the per-  
 “ son on whom they are imposed, but that they were in-  
 “ tended to be a memorial of some divine promise or as-  
 “ surance, respecting things of a public or general con-  
 “ cern\*.” To this purpose he mentions the names of Isaiah’s  
 children *Shearjashub* and *Mahershalalhashbaz*, Isa. vii. 3.  
 viii. 1. But the Doctor does not refuse that the name  
*Immanuel* had *some* relation to the work that Jesus was to  
 perform. Therefore, it was, at least, in so far “ charac-  
 “ teristic of the person.” But this can in no sense be said  
 of the other names referred to. What was to be *done* by  
 the sons of Isaiah? He adds; “ Of Jerusalem it is said, *This*  
 “ *is the name wherewith she shall be called, The Lord our*  
 “ *Righteousness*, (Jer. xxxiii. 16.)” But this is not in point.  
 For the Doctor ought to know that the literal translation  
 of these words is, *This is he who shall call her*, or, *He, who*  
*shall call her, is the Lord, &c.*

He further says; “ In like manner the divine Being, by  
 “ appointing Christ to be called *Emmanuel*, engaged to  
 “ manifest his own presence with his people, by protecting  
 “ and blessing them, and inflicting vengeance on their ene-  
 “ mies and oppressors. For this prediction was given up-  
 “ on the occasion of an invasion by the Israelites and Sy-  
 “ rians.” Had this name been imposed upon any child  
 born in that age, our author might have had some reason  
 for what he says. But what security could it be to the  
 people of Judah, on occasion of a present invasion, that a  
 child

\* P. 28. 29. In our progress, we shall frequently refer to this treatise; because the Doctor himself refers *his* reader to it, for “ the right under-  
 “ standing of these particular texts,” often barely mentioned in his hi-  
 story. It would be ungenerous, then, to deprive *ours* of so signal a be-  
 nefit.



child should be born about eight hundred years afterwards, who should receive the name *Immanuel*; if this was all? Had our author been exposed to such imminent danger, it may be presumed that he would have reckoned this very poor consolation. He makes the *sign* to lie in God's "ap-  
" pointing Christ to be called *Immanuel*." But neither in the prophecy, nor in the gospel-history, have we the express appointment of this name; but only a prediction of this as the event. Therefore, the sign did not consist in the appointment of the name; nor even principally in the name itself; but in the miraculous circumstance of a virgin bearing a son, and in his really being what the name denoted.

The truth of this appears from various considerations. The danger was so imminent, that extraordinary security was requisite. Judah seems to have been, at this time, threatened with a total destruction. But the mere appointment of a significative name, our author himself being judge, would have been nothing uncommon. The manner in which the sign was offered, shews that it was to be of a miraculous kind: *Ask thee a sign of the Lord thy God; ask it either in the depth, or in the height above*, Isa. vii. 11. This does not imply a verbal, but a real sign. That which is promised, is made to consist in the two things already mentioned: *A VIRGIN shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call his name IMMANUEL*. It is introduced with a note of wonder; *Behold!* God claims the work as peculiarly his own; *JEHOVAH himself shall give you a sign*. This language undoubtedly signifies, that the very *giving* of this sign should be a special and extraordinary display of divine grace and power. But all these things the Doctor finds it most expedient to pass over in silence.

As the promise of this sign was to be the great support of the faith of believers, till it should be fulfilled; as it was of  
itself

itself of such a nature as to seem incredible ; it would appear that God gave them an inferior and earthly sign, in subserviency to the other, for supporting their faith in the mean time, and encouraging them confidently to expect the accomplishment of the prediction. For ver. 16. seems to refer to *Shearjashub* : *Before THIS child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forefaken of both her kings.* We cannot, otherwise, perceive any reason why *Isaiah* was commanded by God to take his son with him, a mere child, when going to meet *Ahaz*. The event also verifies this view. For both *Pekah* and *Rezin* were slain within two years after this declaration \*.

That the name *Immanuel* is strictly personal, appears from that beautiful apostrophe made by *JEHOVAH* to him who should be thus denominated : *The Lord spake also unto me, saying, The stretching out of his wings* (the armies of the king of *Affyria*) *shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel* †. Nay, as God's special intention in announcing this extraordinary sign, was to assure his church that the spiritual deliverance she should receive from him at a future epoch, was her great security as to a present temporal deliverance ; believers, in that age, evidently considered it in this light. Therefore we find them triumphantly bidding defiance to the hostile nations that were leagued for their destruction : *Associate yourselves, O ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces ;—for God is with us* \*. It would be vain to say, that they refer to him only who had given them the sign. For their language clearly respects that Deliverer who was the sign promised. By faith they realise it as present. They view the illustrious Personage referred to as already in the midst of them. And well might they do so. For he it was, who had still *saved them, who bare them, and carried*

\* 2 Kin. xv. 29. 30. xvi. 9.

† Isa. viii. 8.

‡ Ch. viii. 9, 10.



*carried them all the days of old.* They view him as the Lord of Hosts, who was to be *sanctified in their hearts*: and this Lord of Hosts is that very *Immanuel* who should be *for a stone of stumbling*, ver. 13, 14. 1 Pet. ii. 8.

That this is properly a personal character, further appears from the connexion stated by the Evangelist between it and the name *Jesus*, Mat. i. 21. 23. As Joseph was commanded to call him who should be born *Jesus*, we are told that *all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet*;—*They shall call his name Immanuel.* We are at the same time informed, that his name was to be called, *Jesus, because he should save his people from their sins.* Therefore, either the name *Immanuel* denotes the dignity of the person, as qualifying him for the work of salvation, or the name *Jesus* does not denote his proper work. The one must signify, that he is truly *God with us*; or the other cannot signify, that he *saves his people from their sins.* The latter cannot be a personal character, unless the former be so too. For we are expressly assured, that the name *Jesus* was imposed upon him, by divine authority, to verify the prophecy; that is, as equivalent to the name *Immanuel*, and as shewing that he was *God with—his people*, whom he was to *save*.

Had the sign consisted in Christ's being “appointed to be called Immanuel,” as the Doctor asserts, undoubtedly Joseph, or Mary, would have been expressly commanded to give him this name. But instead of this, the angel says; *Thou shalt call his name Jesus.* This indisputably proves, that the sign consisted in the *meaning* of the name, as strictly descriptive of the person. Is it inquired; why then is it said in Isaiah, *She shall call his name Immanuel?* The event shews the import of the expression; and that a personal verb is here used for an impersonal, which is very common in Scripture. Accordingly, in Matthew we have it; *They shall call.* The Doctor, indeed, how zealous soever for our

translation on certain occasions, adopts another reading here, though supported only by one of Stephen's MSS. and by that of Cambridge \*. But this language merely signifies what the person should really be ; as, in Scripture, things are often said to be *called*, when the meaning is, that they *are*, or are *manifested to be* †. This must be the sense. For there is a striking difference between these words, *They shall call his name Immanuel*, and what follows, *She called his name Jesus*, ver. 25. That the name was fully verified in him, will afterwards appear ‡.

The Evangelists ascribe to our Saviour *knowledge* of the *thoughts* of men. This is evidently quite different from that *discerning of spirits*, (1 Cor. xii. 10.) which was one of the extraordinary gifts conferred in the apostolic age. The latter seems to have been confined, either to doctrines, or to prophetic oracles. Those, who possessed this gift, had a power of judging whether these came from God or the devil. The apostles seem to have used the term *spirit*, not as denoting the state, but the doctrine of men, 1 John iv. 1. This view is offered to Socinians with a good grace, as it is that of their own Grotius. It is also approved by Slichting ||. It does not appear, that even the apostles had the gift of knowing the states of men. Though it should be urged that we are to understand the *discerning of spirits*, as including this, it cannot be pretended that they had this power constantly. They often admitted those as believers, whom they afterwards discovered to be hypocrites. Thus did Peter *perceive*, that Simon, who formerly seemed to believe, was *in the gall of bitterness*, Acts viii. 23. But however this gift should be explained, it is no where said in the New Testament, that any of the followers of Jesus knew

\* Vid. Pfeifferi Oper. Hebraic. et Exotic. N. T. loc. 2. Pfaffii Var. Lect. cap. 2. p. 205. Vitring. in Isa. vii. 14.

† Whitby in loc. ‡ Vid. Pearson on the Creed, art. 2. p. 129. 130.

|| In loc.



knew the thoughts of men. This the Evangelists not only ascribe to him, but they evidently speak of it as a power which, according to their apprehension, he constantly possessed \*. This is also described as nowise the result of any ordinary means of information; for *he needed not that any should testify of man*, John ii. 25. or of any spiritual communication; but as a power essentially belonging to Jesus. Therefore, he is said to *know in himself*, John vi. 61. This knowledge is also described as extending to all men, and to all in man. *He knew all men.---He knew what was in man*, John ii. 24, 25.

Now, the knowledge of the thoughts of man is a divine prerogative. Therefore the Psalmist assigns this work to God; *Try me and know my thoughts*. He views it as the same with that of searching the heart, which has never been supposed to belong to any creature. For these words are added as exegetical of the preceding; *Search me, O God, and know my heart*, Psal. cxxxix. 23. The Psalmist makes the same ascription elsewhere, when supposing the case of apostacy from God, or secret idolatry; *Shall not God search this out? for he knoweth the secrets of the heart*, Psal. xliv. 20, 21. This work God expressly claims as his own; *I know—their thoughts*, Isa. lxvi. 18. Nay, on this head, he puts all creatures to defiance; *Who can know it? I JEHOVAH do search the heart, I try the reins*, Jer. xvii. 9, 10. The faith of the Old Testament church corresponded with such declarations. Therefore Solomon says, in his prayer at the dedication of the Temple; *Thou, even thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men*, 1 Kin. viii. 39. The Word of God, as opposed to every creature, is a *discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart*, Heb. iv. 12, 13. That this is to be understood of his personal Word, we have elsewhere endeavoured to prove \*. What greatly confirms this

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\* Matt. ix. 4. xii. 25. Luke v. 22. vi. 8. ix. 47. xi. 17.

† Chap. iii. p. 185. Sermons on the Heart, vol. ii. p. 319—323.

view, as it also shews in what sense we are to understand the many testimonies of this kind given by the Evangelists, is the express declaration of our Saviour in his exalted state; “*All the churches shall know that I am he who searcheth the reins and hearts*, Rev. ii. 23. This language evidently excludes any superior kind of knowledge of the heart. If, therefore, Jesus does not know it as the Father does, he is chargeable with that *robbery* which the Spirit of God denies, and which Socinians, in their own way, have all along attempted to show that he never *thought of*. But the knowledge, claimed by him, is precisely of the same kind with the Father’s. This appears from the *end* proposed by both in this work. When JEHOVAH says, *I—do search the heart, I try the reins*; it is *even to give every man according to his ways*, Jer. xvii. 10. When Jesus says, *All the churches shall know that I am he who searcheth the reins and hearts*, how is it meant that his claim to this divine prerogative shall be *known*? It is by the perfect administration of justice. For it immediately follows; *And I will give unto every one of you according to his works*, Rev. ii. 22. Jesus, therefore, discovers his claim to this character in the same manner with the Father. He must, of consequence, have the same title.

God seems to have granted, at times, to those who were inspired, a knowledge of the most secret *words* and *actions* of men; as an evidence of their mission, and for the accomplishment of his purposes of mercy or judgment. This is evident from the history of Elisha, with respect to the king of Syria, and also his servant Gehazi. But in the first instance, his knowledge extended to *the words* only, that were spoken in the king’s bed-chamber, 2 Kings vi. 12. As to the second; there was nothing more than a discovery of the language and conduct of Gehazi, chap. v. 26. Thus, God hath revealed to his servants, as

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we may say, only the *overt* acts of men. But he hath always reserved to himself the knowledge of their thoughts. Nor have we an instance of any one of his servants pretending to judge of the thoughts of men, but by induction from their words or actions.

However, the reason of Jesus knowing the thoughts, as given by Dr P. is his “being appointed the king and judge of men.” Therefore he “has powers given him adapted to those offices, especially the knowledge of the human heart, and the prerogative of declaring the forgiveness of sin.—We ought not therefore,” he says, “to be surprized at such expressions as these, Matt. ix. 4. *And Jesus knowing their thoughts*, John ii. 25. *He knew what was in man*\*.” Here Dr P. speaks of Christ’s being a *king* and *judge*, as if these terms denoted different *offices*. As Soci-nians endeavour to sink the priestly office in the kingly, we need not wonder that they try to make two of the latter. In this, as in many other respects, they resemble the Papists, who, having denied that the second precept of the law is distinct from the first, divide the tenth, to preserve the number. He also seems, as far as possible, to diminish the knowledge belonging to Christ. He speaks of “the knowledge of the human heart.” Now, in the common use of language, this carries a very different idea from discernment of thoughts. A man of strong natural powers and accurate observation, with a considerable portion of experience, may be said, in a limited sense, to possess “the knowledge of the human heart,” while no man, in his right reason, would so much as think of saying, that he knew the *thoughts*. But who can blame our learned author? His system, somewhat different from that of the Baptist, necessarily requires that not he, but his master should *decrease*.

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\* Famil. Illustr. p. 22. We may, in another place, attend to what our author advances with respect to Christ’s *declaring* the forgiveness of sins.

But let us examine the force of the reason assigned for this knowledge, whatever be the supposed degree. It was necessary for Jesus, as “appointed the king and judge of “men.” It is a power “adapted to these offices.” And who can deny it? But pray, good Sir, when was he invested with these offices, and intrusted with this power? If I am not much mistaken, you and your brethren tell us on some occasions, that he received all his honour and power after his resurrection. Something very like this has escaped your own pen. “The reason why Christ was so much distinguished by God the Father, is frequently and fully expressed in the scriptures, *viz.* his obedience to the will of “God, and especially in his submitting to die for the benefit of mankind \* ”----“The *power* and *glory* which was “conferred upon Christ are expressly said to be the reward “of his obedience, and to be subsequent to his resurrection †.” But if Jesus was not made a king and judge till after his resurrection, and if the knowledge of the heart be a “power adapted to these *offices*,” surely he could have no occasion for it, and no title to it, before. However, if we may believe the Evangelists, Jesus *knew what was in man*, *knew the thoughts*, in his state of humiliation. That event, to which this part of the Gospel-history refers, took place near the commencement of his ministry.

But Socinians are chargeable with wonderful shuffling on this head. When pressed with the passages of scripture which ascribe essential dominion to Jesus, especially if these express the faith of believers after his exaltation, they positively assure us, that all his honour and *godlike* power are the fruit of it. On the other hand, when assailed by arguments taken from what he said and did, or from what the disciples believed, in his state of abasement, they virtually retract the former assurances, and are pleased to inform

\* Appeal, p. 13, 14.

† Famil. Illustr. p. 40, 41.



form us, that he had a great deal of honour and power, even while in *the form of a servant*, that is, while purchasing this very honour and power by his obedience. There seems, indeed, to be a studied ambiguity in our author's language; "Christ being appointed the *King* and *Judge* of men, *has* powers given him adapted," &c. But the question is, *Had* he these powers, before he was constituted King and Judge; or, in other words, before he had any need of them? The fact is directly the reverse of what is pretended by Dr P. Christ is appointed the King and Judge of men, because he essentially possesses powers adapted to the work.

There is a continual outcry made by the party, against the usual distinction between the essential and mediatory characters of Jesus; when employed to solve the apparent contradictions in the accounts which the scriptures give of him. But Socinians find occasion for a distinction far more strange. According to the former, two very different relations are sustained by one Person; which is abundantly common among men. But by the latter, the same Person is supposed to stand in situations directly opposite, in the same nature and relation. It is no contradiction, that Jesus should be the proper Son of God, in one relation; and true man in another; that, according to the former, he should know all things (John xxi. 17.), and be ignorant of some things, according to the latter. But that he should have omniscience and limited knowledge; the state of a servant, and the state of God; no power and honour as a King and Judge, and yet a great portion of both,---in one nature and relation; that he should, at the same time, be purchasing a reward to be had only in consequence of finishing his work, and yet possessing it; are contradictions of the grossest kind. On this head, at least, there is a palpable defect in the Socinian system: and it must be new modelled, ere it can be received by men of true reason.

Our author kindly informs us, that “we ought not to be surprized at such expressions as these, *Jesus knowing their thoughts*,” &c. This argues great tenderness for weak readers, who might be so simple as to apprehend that no one could know the thoughts but God. He seems to grant that there is, apparently at least, some ground for surprize. The good man is afraid that the surprize, especially after all that he has said to depreciate the Person, should hurt, not us only, but his own beloved system. But like many *physicians of no value*, the very means he uses to prevent, increase the disorder. For we are more surprized than ever, to learn, not only that a servant obtains great part of his reward, although the proper consequence of his work, before he has well entered on it; but that a mere man may certainly and constantly *discern the thoughts and intents of the heart*. Had this been told those who attended on the ministry of Jesus, it would have surprized them more than any thing he either said or did.

The Evangelists represent Christ as the *object of faith*. Thus Matthew applies that prophecy to him; *In his Name shall the Gentiles trust*, chap. xii. 21. But *trusting in the Name of Jesus*, is simply trusting in Jesus himself, especially according to the Revelation given of him in the Word; just as *loving the name of the Lord*, and *calling upon his name*, denote the love and worship of God. But if the Evangelists viewed Jesus as the object of faith, they must have considered him as God. They were no strangers to that awful denunciation, *Cursed be the man that trusteth in man*; and they must have considered themselves as lying under the lash of it, had they trusted in Jesus, believing him to be a mere man. Nay, had this been their idea, they could never have thought that the prophet Isaiah spoke of him.

They also represent him as the *object of religious worship*. Accordingly they inform us, that the wise men came to  
worship



worship him, Matt. ii. 2. The word \* used cannot be understood of civil homage. For universally, in the New Testament, it denotes such worship as belongs to no creature. When Cornelius worshipped Peter, the latter said, *Stand up ; I myself also am a man*, Acts x. 26. In what sense it is used by Matthew, appears from our Lord's reply to Satan ; *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God*, chap. iv. 10. That this act of adoration, by the wise men, was accepted of God, appears pretty plainly from the peculiar care exercised with respect to their preservation from the wrath of Herod, ver. 12. It is scarcely supposable, that God would have interposed by immediate Revelation, for preserving idolaters. Besides this instance of the worship of Jesus, we have a variety of others recorded †. It is evident, indeed, that he received religious adoration from all his disciples. For while *he was parted from them,—they worshipped him*, Luke xxiv. 51, 52. We are assured that after his ascension the disciples continued their worship. This was so well known, that the primitive Christians are denominated by a periphrasis taken from this very circumstance. They are described as those who call on this name (Son of God) Acts ix. 20, 21. Now, no one can deny that invocation is a special act of worship. By some it is reckoned the highest. Therefore, either the Son of God ought to be worshipped ; or, all the first Christians were idolaters.

Could we believe, with Socinians, that this word, when used by the Evangelists with respect to Christ, is to be understood in a different sense from that in which it is applied to the Father, we would be under a necessity of concluding, that the New Testament church is not sufficiently guarded against idolatry, and that the Evangelists were very improper persons for committing the History of Jesus to writing. For with respect to both the worship given to God, and

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\* Ἱποσχεσθαι.

† See Matt. viii. 2. ix. 18. xx. 20.

that given to Christ, they use the very same word, without the least note of distinction.

He is held forth, in the Evangelical History, as the Lord God of the children of Israel. Therefore the Angel foretold concerning John Baptist; *Many of the children of Israel shall be turn to the Lord their God.* Who this is, evidently appears from the words that follow; *And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias,* Luke i. 16, 17. Now, whomsoever John preceded as an harbinger, he must have been *the Lord God—of the children of Israel.* But it was Jesus whom he preceded, as John himself testifies; *He that cometh after me, is preferred before me,* John i. 27. and again, addressing his disciples; *Ye yourselves bear me witness that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him,* John iii. 28. In all the Gospels, and also in the Acts, Christ is represented as that illustrious Personage, whose forerunner the Baptist was\*. On this account, Zacharias calls John *the prophet of the Highest.* For, says he, *thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways,* Luke i. 76. But let any man in his right senses say, If this language would not have been both absurd and blasphemous, had John been the prophet and harbinger of a mere man?

Indeed, the Lord, whose way is here said to be prepared, is JEHOVAH. For the Evangelist Matthew informs us concerning John, that *this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord,* chap. iii. 3. But the word used by the prophet, is JEHOVAH, Isa. xl. 3. Therefore Jesus, who had John for his forerunner, is, and was considered by the Evangelists, as JEHOVAH. Now, notwithstanding all the *vain things*, that the people have imagined, in their combination against the Lord, and his Anointed; as long as the word of God remains, this must be considered

\* Matt. iii. 3. Mar. i. 2, 3. Acts xiii. 24, 25.



sidered as his incommunicable name. All the presumptuous assertions and silly quibbles of Socinians, can be of no force, with a believing soul, when opposed to such language as this, *I am JEHOVAH, that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another*, Isa. xlii. 8. When the church prays for vengeance on the enemies of God, who have *made a tumult, lifted up the head, and said, Let us take to ourselves the houses of God in possession*, it is for this end, *That men may know that thou, whose name alone is JEHOVAH, art the Most High over all the earth*, Psal. lxxxiii. 18. He, therefore, who is *the Highest* (Luke i. 76.) or *the Most High*, and who has the name JEHOVAH, is God in the proper sense of language; is God alone, not as excluding the Father and Spirit, but as truly divine, and as opposed to every creature, however exalted.

Luke informs us, that Jesus was received by believers, in his time, as the Lord of hosts. For when recording the testimony of Simeon, he declares, that he said to Mary the mother of Jesus; *Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, and for a sign that shall be spoken against*, chap. ii. 34. These words are taken from the prophecy of Isaiah, chap. viii. 13, 14, where they are spoken of JEHOVAH of hosts: *Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence, to both the houses of Israel. --- And many of them shall stumble and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken.* That Jesus, then, who was a *stone of stumbling*, was yet to be the object of religious fear and worship, as the omnipotent God, who *doth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth*. For *the Lord of hosts* is a name expressing almighty power and universal dominion, as well as sovereignty of operation. Simeon, therefore, believed in Jesus as *the Lord*  
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*of hosts.* Nor was this delusive exercise. The Evangelist informs us, that *the Holy Ghost was upon him*, ver. 25. If Simeon was mistaken, Luke must have been so too. Indeed, we find the apostle Peter also considering Christ as that *stone of stumbling* foretold by the prophet, 1 Ep. ii. 8. Those, who in our day, oppose him as the Son of God, have need diligently to inquire, whether the prophecy be not fulfilled in them.

### C H A P. V.

#### *Of our Saviour's Doctrine and Conduct with respect to his Divinity.*

**A**NOTHER argument urged by Dr P. *against the Divinity or Pre-existence of Christ*, is founded on his supposed silence on this subject. “The manner,” he says, “in which our Lord speaks of himself, and of the power by which he worked miracles, is inconsistent, according to the common construction of language, with the idea of his being possessed of any proper power of his own, more than other men have \*.”

What we mean to offer in reply to this argument, will not only show that our Saviour claimed divinity to himself, but at the same time serve as a continued proof of what the Evangelists believed concerning him. The Doctor strenuously urges the concession of the fathers, that, in the three first gospels, Jesus is described merely as man; and pleads from the supposed lateness of the publication of John's gospel, that, although the divinity of Christ were taught in it, the greatest part of the first believers must have died without any knowledge of this doctrine. We shall therefore

\* Earl. Opin. vol. i. p. 13. 14.



fore continue to direct our principal attention to what is narrated by Matthew, Mark, and Luke. And if it appear, that they really believed this doctrine, and taught it in their writings; the whole of our author's reasoning from inaccurate or disjointed expressions taken from the works of the fathers, really or apparently asserting the contrary, must fall to the ground.

We have already proved that Christ is acknowledged by the Evangelists as the *object of faith*. They also represent him as exhibiting himself in this very character: *Who-so shall offend one of these little ones who believe in me, &c.* Mat. xviii. 6.

He demanded *supreme love* from his followers. *If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple*, Luke xiv. 26. that is, every one, who would be his disciple, must love him more than all these; as we learn from Mat. x. 37. If the love, here demanded, be not supreme, we know not what can come under this description. It is love, that excludes the partnership of every other object. This demand undoubtedly implies all that God claims, as his right, in the first and great commandment; *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind*, Mat. xxii. 37. The love, here required, is by no means included in that secondary precept, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*, ver. 39. For Jesus requires, that a man should comparatively *hate* his nearest and dearest neighbour, *yea, his own life also*, for his sake.

Jesus prescribed his *Name's sake* as the *supreme end* to be proposed by his disciples. This language was quite familiar to the Jews, to whom he addressed himself. But they had been always accustomed to restrict it to God. However frequently this expression occurs in the Old Testament,

we do not once read of the *Name's sake* of a creature. It also invariably denotes the supreme motive, reason, or end, whether it be immediately proposed by God or by man. God assigns this as the cause or end of his conduct, in opposition to every other that might be supposed; *For my Name's sake will I defer mine anger;---even for mine own sake will I do it.* He mentions this as equivalent to his glory as the highest end. For it immediately follows; *For how should my Name be polluted? and I will not give my glory to another,* Isa. xlviii. 9. 11. This is described as the end of coming to worship at Jerusalem. Therefore Solomon says; *Concerning a stranger,---that cometh out of a far country for thy Name's sake;---when he shall come and pray towards this place; hear thou,* 1 Kin. viii. 41—43. Believers, under that dispensation, are described as suffering on this as the proper ground; *Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my Name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified,* Isa. lxvi. 5.

This very language Jesus appropriates to himself, and applies so very particularly in regard to his followers, as to leave no reason to doubt that he wished to be considered as that very Being who spoke to his ancient church by Isaiah. He assures his disciples, that their lot should be the same with that of former believers, and that their blessedness should consist in suffering for his Name's sake. *Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company,—for the Son of man's sake. Rejoice ye in that day,—for in like manner did their fathers unto the prophets,* Luke vi. 22. 23. *Every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my Name's sake, shall receive an hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting life,* Mat. xix. 29. Christ says to Ananias concerning Saul; *I will show him how great things he shall suffer for my Name's sake,* Acts ix. 16. Therefore, unless Christ have the same  
Name



Name with God, as being of the same nature, he sets up his glory as a new supreme end, and robs God of his prerogative. If this be with the Father's consent, he suffers his Name to be *polluted* and *gives his glory to another*.

Not only do the Evangelists, as we have already seen, represent Jesus as the object of religious worship; but Jesus himself cheerfully *accepted* the *worship* that was given him. It has been observed, that the word used by them, always in the New Testament, denotes religious adoration. But though it were possible to prove the reverse, it would not affect the argument. For when we read of the worship of Jesus, the circumstances recorded are such as clearly shew, that it was not of a civil, but of a religious kind. It might justly be urged, that, on every occasion, he renounced all the honours of royalty. He refused to be made a king, or even for once to act the part of a judge in civil matters. And can it be thought, that he would receive the highest token of veneration ever given to an earthly sovereign? Even supposing that he knew, that this was meant merely as civil respect, on his own principles he ought to have refused it. For he constantly testified, that his kingdom was *not of this world*. If, therefore, he received this as civil homage, he voluntarily, and in the most effectual manner, confirmed that carnal people in their wild ideas with respect to a temporal kingdom of the Messiah.

But we find that frequently the form of this worship was such, that although he had known that it was meant merely as civil, he could not lawfully have accepted it. Jairus fell at his feet, Mark v. 22. The Syro-phenician woman did the same, ch. vii. 25. His disciples *held him by the feet and worshipped him*, Mat. xxviii. 9. This kind of worship was sometimes given to kings, or their substitutes; but it was unlawful. It was demanded by the kings of Persia. Various reasons have been given why Mordecai  
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the Jew would not bow to Haman ; but the most natural idea is, that he accounted it unlawful. This is the reason assigned by the Jewish historian, who must have been best acquainted with the opinions of his own nation. “ Mordecai alone,” he says, “ bowed not to him, such obedience being against the custom of his country \*.” Even the more intelligent heathens were shocked at this kind of worship, when offered to man, being persuaded that it was divine. Thus Sueton observes, that “ Lucius was the first who procured that Claudius Cæsar should be adored as God : for when he returned from Syria, he would not presume to approach him otherwise than with his head veiled, and turning himself round, he *fell down before him* †.”

This form, then, being used in the idolatrous worship of man, had Jesus been nothing more, he could not have received it without giving the most express encouragement to idolatry. But we have not a single instance of his testifying the least dissatisfaction. No one can doubt, that the Devil demanded religious adoration from him, when he said ; “ *All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me*, Mat. iv. 9. This very worship the wise men gave to Jesus ; for the expression is the same ‡, Nay, this very worship Jesus accepted from Jairus. For, as Mark says, *He fell down*, ch. v. 22. Matthew informs us, that he *worshipped him*, ch. ix. 18 ||. That is, he worshipped Jesus by prostration, the very manner in which Jesus himself, considered as man, worshipped the Father. For

*be*

\* Antiq. l. xi. c. 6.

† Idem miri in adulandum ingenii, primus C. Cæsarem adorari ut Deum instituit : cum reversus ex Syria non aliter adire ausus esset, quam capite velato, circumvertentique se, deinde procumbens. In Vitell. cap. 2.

‡ Εαν πεσων προσκυνησης μοι. Mat. iv. 9. Πεσοντες προσεκυνησαν αυτα, ch. ii. 11.

|| Πιπτει προς τας ποδας αυτου.—Προσεκυνει αυτω.



*he fell on the ground, and prayed*, Mark xiv. 35. If Jesus, then, was a mere man, the angel, who refused the worship of John, was more zealous for the glory of God than he. For this was the very way in which John offered to worship this heavenly messenger: *I fell at his feet to worship him* \*. But he rejected it with horror, assigning it to God as his exclusive prerogative, saying; *See thou do it not: I am thy fellow-servant;—Worship God*, Rev. xix. 10. According to the Socinian doctrine, Jesus ought to have done the same. For how much soever he be exalted above believers, he is still their *fellow-servant*, considered in his relation to God. If Jesus had no right to religious adoration, would not Peter have been a better foundation for the church, than he? For when Cornelius *fell down at his feet, and worshipped him*, he took him up, saying, *stand up; I myself also am a man*, Acts x. 25, 26.

Jesus claimed the glory of the Father as his. What, in one passage he calls the glory of his Father, he, in another, calls his own. *The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels*, Mat. xvi. 27. *When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory*, ch. xxv. 31. In both places he speaks of his coming to judgment. The *glory* is *his*, and the *throne* also. He could never have uttered such language, unless his and the Father's glory were one.

He claimed the church as his property, saying, *Upon this rock will I build my church*, Mat. xvi. 18. But this argument we shall illustrate afterwards.

He asserted his Lordship over the Sabbath. Thus, in reply to the cavils of his enemies, on occasion of his disciples plucking and eating the ears of corn, he said; *The Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath-day*, Mat. xii. 8. As this day was consecrated by God, no one could have a right to loose  
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\* Επεσκειμπροθεν των ποδων αυτου προσκυνησαι αυτω.

the obligation of the precept, but God himself. It would be vain to say, that Christ received this right by delegation. For, according to the Socinian system, he was not yet come to his kingdom. At any rate, the lordship, here claimed, is evidently unlimited.

## C H A P. VI.

### *Of the Evidence of our Saviour's Divinity, from his Miracles.*

JESUS manifested and maintained his claim to a divine character, by the miracles that he wrought. It is granted, that these were more directly meant to prove his divine mission as Messiah; and that our Saviour appealed to them in this respect. But they also proved the essential dignity of the Messenger. The mere working of a miracle, indeed, will not prove the divinity of the immediate agent. The most that it can prove, is a mission from God. It also confirms the truth of the doctrine which is taught. But if the immediate agent of the miracle lays claim to Deity, the truth of his doctrine in this respect cannot be denied, without a denial of the reality of the miracle.

Jesus wrought miracles in confirmation of his doctrine. These must have confirmed the whole of his doctrine; or they could not confirm any part of it. He taught that he was the true Messiah: and it is granted by Socinians, that his claim to this character was incontestably demonstrated by his wonderful works. If he also taught that he was God, the same works must have equally confirmed this branch of his doctrine. But he undoubtedly did so, by declaring that he had power to forgive sin: and he appealed to miracles as an evidence of this power. When the man sick of the palsy, was brought to him, *seeing their faith, he said,*



said, Son,---thy sins be forgiven thee. But some of the Scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth. But he said, Whether is it easier to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee, or to say, Arise and walk? He declares, that it is the same to him to work a miracle, and to forgive sin; both these being equally exertions of divine power. Then he adds; But that ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sin, (he said to the sick of the palsy) Arise, take up thy bed, and go into thine own house, Matt. ix. 1---6. But we propose to explain this passage more fully afterwards, as containing a distinct and peculiar proof of our Saviour's Deity, and of his asserting his claim to it.

But our Lord did not merely claim particular prerogatives of Deity, and prove his title to these by his works. He expressly asserted his unity of essence with the Father, and appealed to his works as incontrovertibly proving the truth of his doctrine in this respect. *Though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know that the Father is in me, and I in him*, John x. 38, 39.

This language undoubtedly signifies, that the Father could as little work, nay exist, without the Son, as the Son without the Father. It shews in the clearest manner, in what sense he had previously said, *I and my Father are one*, ver. 30. The Father exists and operates in him: he exists and operates in the Father: and thus they *are one* in essence and operation.

Now, either the wonderful works of Jesus were not real miracles; or they were decisive proofs of his being God equal with the Father. Socinians will not assert the former. For this would reduce them to the necessity of entirely denying that Jesus is the Messiah. They cannot, therefore, evade the force of the latter.

But this proof of the Deity of Christ, is not the only one which arises from his wonderful works. These very works

afford us evidence of a more direct nature. The manner in which he wrought his miracles, the concomitant circumstances, and the language of the sacred writers who record them, clearly shew, that he acted as a divine Person, that, in various instances, he wished this to appear, and that the inspired historians viewed matters in no other light.

Jesus wrought miracles in *his own Name*. Had he sustained no higher character than that of a servant, he ought to have used the Name of God, if not as necessary for working the miracle, yet for shewing others, by what power, and for what end, it was wrought. In this respect, he ought also to have set an example of self-denial before his followers. But we have not a single instance of his exercising this power, in the Name of God. Therefore, if it was not essentially his own, he acted a most ungrateful and undutiful part; a part,—that, instead of entitling him to honours inconceivably exceeding those conferred on any other servant, shewed, in the clearest light, that he deserved the most severe punishment which injured Omnipotence could inflict. His disciples acted very differently. We have not a single instance of their exercising the power entrusted to them, without an express declaration of dependence. Not one of them performed a miracle in his own name. And it is very remarkable, that they never mention the Name of God, but that of Jesus. They ascribe all their power to him. The seventy disciples returned, saying, *Lord, even the devils are subject to us, through, or in thy Name*, Luke x. 17. Jesus restricted his disciples to this manner of operation: *In my Name they shall cast out devils, they shall speak with new tongues, &c.* Nay, he suspended all their delegated power of working miracles upon faith in his Name. He declared all their future miracles to be *signs* that should follow them that believed, Mark xvi. 17. Accordingly, the apostles testify the greatest anxiety lest any should think



think that these works were done by their own power, ascribe all their power to their Master, and declare that their exercise of it was the immediate fruit of faith in him. Thus, when the multitude marvelled at the cure of the lame man, Peter addressed them in these words, immediately referring to *the Prince of Life ;---And his Name, through faith in his Name, hath made this man strong :---yea, the faith which is by him, hath given him this perfect soundness*, Acts iii. 16. Here, they acknowledge him, not only as the Supreme Agent in the miracle, but as both the object, and the author of their faith, which was the mean by which they performed it.

Jesus wrought miracles by his *own power*, as a divine agent. He was, therefore, chargeable with no arrogant assumption, in working them in his own Name. All the power that was necessary for the performance of the most wonderful works, resided in him as its proper subject. Thence, with respect to the cure effected on the woman who *came in the press behind, and touched his garments*, we are informed that *virtue had gone out of him*, Mark v. 27. —30. He was, indeed, *a man approved of God, by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by him*, Acts ii. 22. These were evidences, that he was *anointed with the Holy Ghost, and with power*, and that *God was with him*, chap. x. 38. But while God was *with* him, as his servant whom he *upheld*, this was not all. The Father was also *in* him, as his own eternal Son. Therefore as we have seen, he appeals to his works, as evidences of his equality with the Father. *If I do not the works of my Father*, he says, *believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works : that ye may know that the Father is in me, and I in him*, John x. 37, 38. He declares himself to be as properly an agent in these works, as the Father. *If I do not the works of my Father, &c.*

But as the disciples attributed all their works to Jesus, it was by no means an empty compliment. For, in working miracles, they constantly acted by a communication of power from him. He claims the prerogative of conferring this : *I give unto you power to tread upon serpents, and over all the power of the enemy*, Luke x. 19. The inspired writer of the History of the Apostles informs us, that Paul and Barnabas *spake boldly in the Lord, who gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands*, Acts xiv. 3. They appear merely as his instruments. But he who has no physical power of his own, who in all his exertions is no more than the instrument of another, cannot communicate his power to a third person. Far less can he do so, according to his own pleasure. But as there was great variety in the extraordinary gifts conferred by the Head of the church, his disciples ascribed sovereignty to him in the distribution of them : *Unto every one of us is grace given, according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended, ---he gave gifts unto men*, Eph. iv. 7. 8.

He wrought miracles by a word of command. On this account, even unbelievers were astonished. When our Lord had cast out an unclean spirit, his hearers were *all amazed, and spake among themselves, saying, What a word is this ? for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out*, Luke iv. 36. The Evangelists take particular notice of this circumstance : *He cast out the spirits*, saith Matthew, *with his word*, chap. viii. 16. Thus, he clearly shewed, that he was that very Word who created the worlds. For his almighty *fiat* was all that was necessary. *He spake and it was done*. As, in the beginning, he had said, *Let there be light, and there was light*, in the days of his flesh he said, *Be thou clean, and immediately the leprosy was cleansed*, Matt. viii. 3. We have but one instance  
of



of any of the followers of Christ working a miracle in an authoritative manner. Paul said to the spirit of divination that possessed a certain damsel, *I command thee to come out of her*, Acts xvi. 18. Is it said, that Jesus gave to the twelve, *power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases* (Luke ix. 1.)? The very manner of expression contains a sufficient reply. For *he gave* them this power; and it was only to be exercised in his name, Mark-xvi. 17. Now, as he, who has no physical power of his own, who is merely the instrument of another, cannot communicate this power to a third person, and far less in a sovereign manner; least of all, can he confer a right to exercise it in his own name. Although the former were not impossible, the latter would be an act of rebellion against the original and proper superior. Even in that solitary instance already mentioned, Paul is careful to shew that he did not speak from his own authority. For he says; *I command thee, in the Name of Jesus Christ, to come out of her*. Jesus gave his command absolutely, without the least limitation or reference to any higher agent; Paul, only like a servant repeating the orders of his Master. So powerful was Christ's word of command, that he could not only himself suspend the laws of nature; but, by directing this word to another, subject them to him also. Peter was convinced of this. He said, *Lord, if it be thou, bid me, or rather, command me to come unto thee on the water*. And he said, *Come*. And Peter walked on the water, to go to Jesus. But to shew, that it was only faith in the power of Christ, conveyed by his command, that enabled the disciple to do this, he began to sink as soon as his faith began to fail, Matt. xiv. 28.—30.

Jesus discovered his supreme authority by the language of rebuke. When there was a great storm, he *rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still: and the wind ceased, and there was a great calm*, Mark iv. 39. This word

is never once used with respect to any of the disciples, when we read of the miracles wrought by them. It carries such an air of majesty with it, as undoubtedly to convey the idea of divine authority. The action, expressed by it, seems to have made this impression on those who were witnesses. They appear to have been less afraid at the danger itself, than at the manner in which it was removed. *They feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of Person is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?* ver. 41. We cannot conceive, that the inspired writers viewed it in any other light. For the three former Evangelists all mention the circumstance of his rebuking these stormy elements; and they all use the same word \*. Indeed, this language is, in scripture, appropriated to God, particularly with respect to the sea. *The waters stood above the mountains. At thy rebuke they fled.*---*He rebuked the Red Sea also; and it was dried up,* Psal. civ. 6, 7. cvi. 9. The Seventy, in their version, use the same word with the Evangelist. Thus, Jesus shewed, that it was he who had formerly manifested his dominion over the watery element, and that this ascription belonged to him, *Thou rulest the raging of the sea: when the waters thereof arise, thou stillest them,* Psal. lxxxix. 9. For when he rebuked the sea, *there was a great calm.*

He also rebuked the devils, when he cast them out, Matt. xvii. 18. Mark i. 25. The disciples attempted nothing of this kind. Jesus gave them power to heal. That of rebuking diseases he reserved to himself. When the mother of Peter's wife was *taken with a great fever, he rebuked the fever, and it left her,* Luke iv. 38, 39.

Our Lord, in his miracles, displayed *creative* power, and this extending to the whole of nature. At the power of the disciples was limited, we find nothing like a creating act performed by any of them. But he multiplied the loaves.

He

\* ΕΝΕΤΙΜΗΣΕ.



He turned water into wine. When his disciples came to land, *they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread*, John xxi. 9. It was a miracle of this kind that Satan demanded, as a proof of our Saviour's Deity: *If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread*, Matt. iv. 3. He desires that he would change one body into another, as this was a creating act; and that he would do so by a word of *command*, as it was in this manner that God created. Jesus not only gave forth his command, but he directed it to dead matter. He spoke to the closed ear and to the fettered tongue of the deaf man; and they obeyed his voice. *He said, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened. And straightway his ears were opened, and the strings of his tongue were loosed*, Mark vii. 34, 35. The legion of devils acknowledged his absolute power, when they said, *Suffer us to go into the herd of swine*. Jesus himself declared it, when he answered, *Go*, Matt. viii. 31, 32. It cannot reasonably be alleged, that he had this universal authority, because all power was given him in heaven, and in earth. For Socinians deny that he was advanced to this honour, before he had finished his obedience. But he displayed that sovereign authority of which we speak, in the very depths of his humiliation. Even when he delivered himself up to his enemies, by a single word he made the multitude *fall to the ground*, John xviii. 6.

Jesus could communicate his healing power, when the object was at *a distance*, as well as when at hand. In this way he cured the centurion's servant. We are told, indeed, concerning Paul, that *from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them*, Acts xix. 12. But here there was the intervention of a sensible mean, evidently expressing the inferiority of the servant to the Master. How much more like a divine agent, to effect a cure on a distant object by a word,

than by a handkerchief! The centurion knew that nothing more was necessary. *Speak the word only*, he says, *and my servant shall be healed*, Matt. viii. 8.---13. When these miracles of the apostle of the Gentiles are recorded, the Spirit informs us, that *God wrought them by the hands of Paul*, Acts xix. 11. He was merely the instrument. But this is never said of Jesus. On the contrary, he extols the faith of the centurion, because it was so great. Now, what was the object of this faith? The sovereign authority of Christ. With this the centurion does not compare, but contrast, his own limited power: *I am a man under authority*. He argues from the less to the greater.

He declared his mighty works to be the effects of his own will. *The Son quickneth whom he will*, John v. 21. The leper, who came to him, in a twofold respect expressed his faith in the divine power of Jesus. He worshipped him; and he testified his persuasion that the exercise of divine power depended on his will. *Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean*. Jesus approved, both of his worship, and of his confession. For he said, *I will, be thou clean*, Matt. viii. 2, 3. In a work ascribed to Justin Martyr, these words are thus viewed: “That the power of the Son  
“and Holy Ghost is not inferior to that of the Father, we  
“learn from the sacred writings. But in what manner,  
“hear the word itself. *Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that*  
“*did he in heaven, and in earth* \*. Thus spake David con-  
“cerning the Father. But the Son shewing this very power  
“on the leper, says, *I will, be thou clean, &c.* †”

The wonderful works, performed by Jesus, are expressly called *his own*. Thus it is said, *Many believed in his Name, when they saw his miracles which he did*, John ii. 23. It has been observed, that the word *θεωρεῖν* is applied, both by sacred, and by profane writers, to seeing and diligently con-  
sidering

\* Psal. cxxxv. 6.

† Expositio Fidei, p. 377.



sidering any thing as a divine work. But whatever was the idea of these persons, the inspired apostle particularly informs the church that the miracles were Christ's. There is no tautology here. Our Lord did not merely perform these miracles, but he performed them as *his*. He did not act as an instrument. They were his own works. It is indeed surprising, that the force of this striking expression has been overlooked by our translators \*. We have the same properly rendered, chap. vi. 2. *A great multitude followed him, because they saw HIS miracles which he did.* But no such language is used concerning the miracles wrought by the apostles. The Evangelist Mark, even when recording the honourable commission given them, guards his readers against supposing that these works were theirs. Though performed by them, he ascribes them all to Christ. *They went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following,* chap. xvi. 20. The same Lord is meant, who, in the preceding verse, is said to have been *received up into heaven.*

The *end* that Jesus had in view, in working miracles, is a proof of his Deity. He, indeed, designed to prove the truth of his mission; but in connexion with this, his divine nature. He sought not his own glory, because he was in a state of humiliation. But he occasionally displayed so much of it, as to shew that his humiliation was voluntary. When he turned the water into wine, *he manifested forth his glory, and his disciples believed on him,* John ii. 11. When information was sent him of the sickness of Lazarus, he said, *This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby,* chap. xi. 4. Here he mentions his own glory as the ultimate end in the miracle he had in view. One circumstance, concerning this miracle, deserves our particular attention. Martha, although she

\* θεωρουντες αυτου τα σημεια α ειποισ.

she believed in him, seems to have thought that he had his miraculous power merely by delegation, and that he could not exert it without prayer to God for his assistance. *I know*, she says, *that even now whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee.* But Jesus, much as he sought the glory of him that sent him, could not seek it at the expence of what essentially belonged to himself. He would work no miracle, till the faith of Martha rose in its exercise. Therefore, he proceeds to shew her that he was himself the fountain of life. All miracles being signs, the work that he was about to perform on Lazarus being especially a sign of his divine power in raising the spiritually dead ; he first instructs her in his character as *the Resurrection and the Life*, as the object of faith in this respect. When Martha seemed to object to the removal of the gravestone, Jesus reproved her in these words, *Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?* ver. 40. Whether he had expressly uttered this language before, or only refers to the tenor of his discourse, we cannot say. But he had formerly declared himself to be the object of faith as *the Life*. Therefore, the glory to be seen, by means of this faith, must have been his glory. Indeed this is nothing more than what he had declared to his disciples.

In a word, the miracles of Jesus are *recorded* for our use, as evidences of his being a divine Person. John xx. 30, 31. *Many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Son of God ; and that believing, ye might have life through his Name.* That this character, *the Son of God*, respects the divine nature of Christ, I mean afterwards particularly to shew. I shall only observe at present, that the Evangelist here declares, that these signs were written for the express purpose of exhibiting Jesus in such a character, that he might safely be



be acknowledged as the proper object of faith, and, as such, communicate life to all who believe in him.

Before leaving this point, it may be proper to consider an objection, on which our author seems to lay great stress. It has, indeed, been all along a principal strong hold of the party. The Doctor refers to it different times in what he calls *Arguments against the Divinity of Christ*. “He always spake of himself,” he says, “as receiving his doctrine, and his power from him (God), and again and again disclaimed having any power of his own. John v. 19. *Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of himself.* Chap. xiv. 10. *The words which I speak unto you, I speak not of myself, but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doth the works* \*.—There is also another consideration which I would recommend to those who maintain that Christ is either God, or the Maker of the world under God. It is this: The manner in which our Lord speaks of himself, and of the power by which he worked miracles, is inconsistent, according to the common construction of language, with the idea of his being possessed of any proper power of his own, more than other men have †.”

It is a striking evidence of the perverseness of men, that the very language which clearly proves the equality of the Son with the Father, should be urged as a proof of his essential inferiority. In reading the New Testament, it indeed deserves our particular and constant attention, that the great end which Christ had immediately in view, in his personal ministry, was to demonstrate his divine mission. This was especially necessary, because he could not otherwise shew that he was the promised Messiah, that he had authority to alter the state of the church, and that his doctrine was substantially the same with what had been taught

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\* Earl Opin. vol. i. p. 10.

† Ibid. p. 13.

and believed from the beginning. Although as the eternal Son of God, he was essentially entitled to all those acts of worship that belong to the Father, yet he was the immediate object of faith, in order to salvation, only as *a Son given* \*. For, merely as a Son, he had no connexion with our salvation. Faith could have no ground to rest on, but his character as the Son engaged to be our Surety. This was its only *way*. Therefore, his title to the character of Messiah proved that he was a Son equal with the Father. I may say, indeed, that the proof was reciprocal. The moment that his mediatory character was established, it undeniably followed, that he was the proper Son of God. For no other was promised; and his work was such, that none but God could perform it. On the other hand, in proving his character as Messiah, he appealed to his doctrine and works. Now, he *spoke the words of God*, John iii. 34. and did such works as shewed that the Father was in him, and he in the Father, that he was of the same essence with him. Thence it naturally followed, that he was the true Messiah. Thus, his mediatory character proved his Deity, and the evidences of his Deity established his claim to the character of Mediator.

This being the case, it is not surprising that we should find him using many expressions which include both; and that, in one sentence, he should speak of himself both as an inferior and as an equal. The first passage referred to by the learned gentleman, seems to be one of these. The generality of orthodox writers have, indeed, confined it entirely to the Deity. In this sense Jesus might say, with the greatest propriety, *the Son can do nothing of himself*, because he can do nothing *separately* from the Father, the essence being the same. But, as our Lord undeniably speaks of himself as Mediator in several of the following assertions, it appears that even in this he makes choice of such language as will apply to him, either in his essential, or in his official character.

\* Isa. ix. 6.



character. This was very natural, indeed. For almost all the external works of God which have been done by the Son, have been done by him as Mediator, or in relation to his mediatory work. Not merely had the previous displays of his judicial or of his quickening power this respect, but all his work of providence since the fall, and the whole of his conduct towards his ancient church. Therefore, Jesus could not properly describe his operation, even as a divine Person, in its full extent, had he excluded that delegated character in which he had made all those displays of Deity to the church, with which she had formerly been favoured. Because he says, *The Son can do nothing of himself*, must we conclude that he meant to deny essential equality with the Father? The words immediately added, *but what he seeth the Father do*, shew the very contrary. These our author has prudently left out, when quoting this verse, and framing his argument from it. They undoubtedly restrict the meaning of the preceding declaration, and particularly shew in what sense we are to understand the expression *of himself*. The Jews had charged him with Sabbath-breaking, and also with making himself equal with God. He replies to the charge complexly viewed. He informs them, that he *can do nothing*, even in the discharge of the mediatory work entrusted to him, inconsistent with the will of his Father; and that, therefore, in *loosing* the Sabbath, he was not to be viewed as a transgressor, because he did nothing but what *he seeth the Father do* in continuing to work, in the preservation and deliverance of his creatures, on the Sabbath, as well as on other days. As a proof that he cannot oppose the Father in his operation, he subjoins; *For what things SOEVER he doth THESE also doth the Son LIKEWISE*, that is, the same works in all their extent, in the same manner. He means to assert, that his essential equality with the Father, proved by absolute sameness of operation, precluded the

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the possibility of his doing any thing, even in the discharge of his office, that could make him a transgressor. Here we have a clear proof, that his mediatory inferiority is not in the least inconsistent with essential equality. This negative assertion, therefore, instead of shewing that his power is limited and derived, proves that it is really divine.

Dr P. entirely mistakes the meaning of the passage. Our Lord does not speak of the *origin*, but of the *exercise* of this power. He does not deny that he had any properly *his own*; but that he could employ it in opposition to the Father. For while he refuses that he can do any thing inconsistent with the will and example of the Father, or with the commandment given him as Mediator; he at the same time asserts that he can do ( $\tau\iota$ ) *whatsoever he seeth the Father doing*. And to whom can this language belong, but to a person essentially divine? When he afterwards asserts, that he hath life *in himself*, ver. 26. it takes off all the force of the argument drawn from his saying, that he *can do nothing of himself*. For if the former expression mean any thing, it must mean that he is possessed of proper power of his own, that he has what the Doctor obstinately refuses, extraordinary power inherent in himself \*. That *the Son can do nothing of himself*, but in the manner expressed, instead of disproving, as clearly demonstrates, his essential perfection, as when it is said of God, that he *cannot deny himself*, 2 Tim. ii. 13. The unity of the divine essence prevents the former, as well as the latter. The only difference is, that the last expression immediately respects the perfections, and the other the persons in the nature of God.

When our Lord uses the word *seeth*, he seems to choose a term that refers to, both his mediatory, and his divine character. A servant, as Jesus was in his mediatory work, hath his eye to the hand of his Master. But the nature of the

\* Famil. Illustr. p. 22.



the vision is such, as clearly to shew that no servant, but one essentially equal, could be capable of it. For it extends to all the operations of the Father, without exception. It hath often been justly observed, that such expressions, when used with respect to the Deity, do not signify the *means* of knowledge, but the *signs* and *evidences* of it \*. When it is said, that the Son *doth whatsoever he seeth the Father doing*, it by no means implies, as Grotius asserts †, that the Son imitates the Father, as a scholar doth his master; or that the Father works first in order of time, and that the Son works after him: but that being infinitely acquainted with the will of the Father, and being of the same nature, he performs the self-same works. *Seeing*, here, is the same with divine omniscience ‡. *Hearing* is in this very sense ascribed to the Holy Spirit; *Whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak*, John xvi. 13. Whether he be viewed as a Person, or, according to Socinians, merely as a perfection, *hearing* must be understood as the evidence of infinite knowledge. In the same sense our Lord declares concerning himself, John iii. 11. *We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen*: where *seeing* is exegetical of *knowing*; only, as some apprehend, expressive of the peculiar manner of knowing, by intuition. For he *hath seen the Father*. He recommends himself as *the faithful and true witness*, by referring to ocular demonstration and personal acquaintance, which, as connected with integrity, are accounted the best qualifications of a witness among men. He does not testify from report, but from what he hath *seen*. Nor, like a false witness, does he declare what he is ignorant of, but what he *knows* infinitely well. This language is evidently used after the manner of men. But it must be understood without the idea of that imperfection necessarily attached to

\* Vid. Owen on the Spirit, p. 162. † In loc.

‡ Vid. Glassii Phil. Sac. l. 5 t. 1. c. 7. p. 1574.

to human knowledge. It is said with respect to God absolutely considered; *The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God*, Psal. xiv. 2. But shall we thence infer, that God can know nothing, without the use of those means employed by man?

Dr P. also quotes John xiv. 10. as a proof that Jesus has neither doctrine nor power of his own. He indeed says, *The words which I speak unto you, I speak not of myself; but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doth the works*. But if the connexion and design of this language be fairly considered, it will appear that Socinians have no great reason to boast of their argument from it. Our Lord does not express himself in this manner, because the disciples were giving him too much honour, but because they gave him too little. Jesus having said, *If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him*; Philip takes occasion to say, *Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us*. He most probably wished to see the Person, or some visible likeness of the Father. But Jesus reproves him for his ignorance: *Have I been so long time with you, and hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father: And how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? Our Lord says, He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father*, because he is *the express image of his Person*. I am bold to aver, that had these words been uttered by the most holy man that ever existed, they would have been blasphemy. For supposing that Jesus was perfectly holy as man, and no more, it was impossible that all the divine perfections could be seen in him. Those especially that are most distinguishing, as being incommunicable, must have been totally hid. How could the proper eternity of God be seen in him, who had no existence before he was born in Bethlehem? His immensity, in a mean  
confined



confined to a particu'ar spot? His omniscience, in one whose knowledge was limited? Or his incomprehensibility, in a Person whose nature was as fully understood by the disciples as their own? No single perfection could be fully seen, unless finite can contain and display that which is infinite.

But to shew that he asserted unity of essence with the Father, he adds this question; *Believest thou not, that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?* Then he declares; that in giving this testimony concerning his own essential dignity, he no more acted independently of the authority of God, than in any other part of his doctrine; but only faithfully discharged his office as Mediator. *The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself.* As a proof that his testimony was true, he appeals to his works. *But the Father that dwelleth in me, he doth the works.* By this appeal, he does not mean to declare, that they merely proved the truth of his doctrine in general, but that they particularly established that which he presently asserted, his sameness of nature with the Father; shewing that the Father constantly dwelt in him, not only by his Spirit, with respect to office, but essentially. Thence, the works done by him, in support of his claim to Deity, were as much the Father's as his; and were, therefore, to be viewed as the Father's confirmation of Christ's doctrine on this head.

To guard his disciples against the possibility of mistaking his meaning, he repeats what he had already advanced, demanding their faith. *Believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in me.* He mentions himself in the first place, because the point to be proved was his own essential dignity, of which some of his disciples were not sufficiently convinced. For they had no doubt of his being the Messiah, and could never imagine that his works were performed by any power but that of God. Then he illustrates his equality with the Father, by shewing the efficacy of faith

in him as its proper object, in producing works such as his, and greater, as to their spiritual effects, in consequence of the effusion of the Spirit, ver. 12. He also proves that his power is the same with the Father's, in hearing and answering prayer : *Whatsoever ye ask in my Name, that will I do.* Nay, he repeats this declaration, the more to impress them with a sense of his essential dignity : *If ye shall ask any thing in my Name, I will do it,* ver. 13, 14.

Thus, we have a striking proof of the presumption of Socinians, in their perversion of this passage. For it contains the clearest evidence that the Son is of the same essence with the Father. But our author will admit nothing as a proof of the Trinity, but what would destroy the unity, or overthrow the work of mediation. Unless it appear that the Son can act separately from the Father, or, at least without regard to his will, he insists that he is a mere man. In his application of these passages, he fully verifies his own observations. By attending only to some “ particular expressions, and neglecting, or *wholly overlooking* others, the “ strangest and most unaccountable opinions may be ascribed to writers. Nay, without considering the relation that “ particular expressions bear to others, and to the tenor of “ the whole work, sentiments the very reverse of those “ which the writers meant to inculcate may be ascribed to “ them \*.”

But Dr P. is not done with this objection. He illustrates it in the following manner : If Christ “ was the “ Maker of the world, and if, in the creation of it, he exerted no power but what properly *belonged to himself*, and “ what was as much *his own*, as the power of *speaking*, or “ *walking* belongs to man (though depending ultimately “ upon that supreme Power, in which we all live, and move, “ and have our being) he could not, with any propriety,

“ and

\* Earl. Op. vol. i. p. 2.



“ and without knowing that he must be misunderstood, have  
 “ said that *of himself he could do nothing*, that *the words*  
 “ *which he spake were not his own*, and that *the Father*  
 “ *within him did the works* \*.”

Did this power belong to Christ alone, the Doctor's inference would be just. But power may *properly* belong to one, although not exclusively. Thus Christ as “ the Maker  
 “ of the world,” and as “ exerting no power but what *pro-*  
 “ *perly belonged to himself*,” might say with propriety “ that  
 “ *of himself he could do nothing*.” His language might have  
 been liable to misinterpretation, had he said nothing more  
 than what our author is pleased to quote. But he *knew* that  
 he could *not* be *misunderstood* by any who were not deter-  
 mined to wrest his words; as he added;—*but whatsoever he*  
*seeth the Father doing*. For this expression must have con-  
 vinced his hearers, that he claimed an operation as extensive  
 as the Father's. The design and connexion of the other  
 passage as clearly shew that he could not be misunderstood  
 by his disciples.

The resemblance used by the learned writer is certainly  
 ill-chosen. For he could not be “ the Maker of the world,”  
 whose power did not more *properly belong to himself*, than  
 the power of speaking or walking to man. For the crea-  
 ture is dependent on God his Maker for the whole of his  
 power. But this cannot be said of the Son. For he doth  
 all the works of the Father *ομοως, in the same manner*, John  
 v. 19. I should also think, that a man “ depends on that  
 “ supreme Power in which we all live, and move, and have  
 “ our being,” not merely *ultimately*, but *immediately*. Un-  
 less, it can be proved, that we can speak without breathing,  
 every exertion of this faculty must proceed from Him who  
*giveth to all*, not merely the principle of *life*, but *breath*,  
*and all things*. If it be allowed that *walking* is one species

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of

\* Ibid. p. 14.

of motion ; undoubtedly, in the exercise of this power also, we must immediately depend on Him *in whom we move.*

## C H A P. VII.

### *Of the Proof of our Saviour's Divine Nature, from his forgiving Sin.*

JESUS claimed the prerogative of conferring forgiveness. Even Socinians will not refuse that the proper exercise of this power belongs to God only. But Dr P. when illustrating our Saviour's language to the paralytic man, Matt. ix. 2. expresses himself in this manner: " Christ  
" being appointed the *King* and *Judge* of men, had power  
" given him adapted to these offices, especially the know-  
" ledge of the human heart, and the prerogative of declaring  
" the forgiveness of sin, which always accompanies the re-  
" gal authority ; but being assisted by divine wisdom and  
" discernment, as well as by divine power in the exercise of  
" this high office, it is, in fact, the same thing as the judg-  
" ment and mercy of God displayed by the instrumentality  
" of Jesus Christ \*." His ideas concerning the knowledge of the heart, we have already considered. He confines our Saviour's prerogative to that of merely *declaring* the forgiveness of sin. Jesus indeed said to the man sick of the palsy, *Thy sins be forgiven thee.* This is all that the Doctor quotes. But even this is more than a mere declaration of forgiveness. The scribes understood it as a claim of power actually to forgive. For they said, *This man blasphemeth.* Christ spoke the same words to the woman who had been a sinner : and his hearers put the same construction on them.

\* Famil. Illustr. p. 22.



them. *Then they that sat at meat with him, began to say among themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also?* Luke vii. 48, 49. We have no reason to think, that, in either of these instances, they misunderstood him. For with respect to the former, he expressed his meaning still more clearly, addressing himself to those who inwardly accused him of blasphemy; *That ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins (he saith to the sick of the palsy) Arise, take up thy bed, &c.* He wrought a miracle expressly for the purpose of shewing them, that he had power, not merely to declare the forgiveness of sins, but actually to forgive them. An inspired apostle ascribes the same power to Jesus; nay, speaks of this as the common faith: *As Christ forgave you, so also do ye,* Col. iii. 13.

Some Socinians have been more liberal to Jesus, than our author seems disposed to be. They have acknowledged, that he really had power given him to forgive sin, in consequence of his exaltation. But our Lord Jesus, who is *the only wise God*, foreseeing the impiety of his adversaries, hath provided an antidote. For he claimed this power, and wrought a miracle to prove that he really possessed it, in his state of humiliation. *That ye may know*, he says, *that the Son of man hath power ON EARTH to forgive sins, &c.* Therefore, if any deny this important truth, they do not err for want of means. They *may* know it, if they do not wilfully resist the clearest evidence.

But I am rather at a loss to know what the Doctor means by saying, that “the prerogative of declaring the forgiveness of sin *always* accompanies the regal authority.” It cannot be supposed that he refers to the royal prerogative of extending mercy to condemned malefactors, *of forgiving sin* against the state. For this is more than he grants to the Saviour. Besides, it has not been *universally* accounted a necessary accompaniment of regal authority. Does he mean the

right of merely *declaring* this forgiveness? But how can this be a natural concomitant of royalty, without the right of actually forgiving? We have not heard of any prince pluming himself on the possession of “this high office,” as our author calls it. Did he talk to a temporal monarch, of his “prerogative of declaring the forgiveness of sin;” he would certainly apprehend that the good man mistook him for *His Holiness*. The only thing that could make him hesitate, would be the meanness of the ascription, which even the *Servant of the servants of Jesus* would reckon an insult to his dignity.

But according to the nature of the expression, without insisting on its awkward singularity, evidently meant to serve the present purpose, the prerogative of the *King of kings* must be unspeakably inferior to that of many earthly potentates, who have the right of actually forgiving crimes against the state. But our author exhibits the King of Zion as a mere herald. He reserves no other honour for him than that of proclamation. However, this declaratory function may be greater than we apprehend. For Jesus is “*assisted*” not only “by divine wisdom and discernment,” but “by divine power,” in the exercise of “this high office.” Whatever use the Doctor may suppose for the former, I cannot conceive what he has to do with the latter. One would not think, that the mere intimation of a sentence required much power. But here we have a parcel of *great swelling words* heaped together, to hide the mere nothing that is left in point of fact; like the many pompous titles of a prince without power, and without dominions.

The Doctor’s magic lanthorn, entirely different in its construction from those generally used, having the power of reducing its object almost to nothing; he gives a very necessary caution to the wondering spectators. “We ought not “to be *surprised*,” he says, “at such expressions as this,



“ *Thy sins be forgiven thee.*” He has certainly something in view that may remove our astonishment. Here it is. “ The multitude who saw Christ exerting a miraculous power upon this occasion, and heard him express himself in this manner, had no idea of his claiming any extraordinary power, as *naturally inherent in himself*; for it is said, ver. 8. “ *that when the multitude saw it, they marvelled and glorified God, who had given such power unto men.*” The whole force of our author’s argument is; “ Good Christian people, “ there is not the least reason for your wondering that Jesus, “ a mere man, God’s servant, fulfilling that obedience necessary for his own salvation, should not only know the “ thoughts of men, but declare that he had *power to forgive* “ *sins*;—as the *unbelieving* Jews themselves did not thence “ conclude that he was a divine Person.” But the very Jews were *surprised*. They *marvelled*. Yes; “ but they “ had no idea of his claiming any extraordinary power as “ *inherent in himself*.” If our author has compared this account with that given by the other Evangelists, which is not quite improbable, he must know that the multitude had no proper ground for entertaining such an idea. For it does not appear, that they heard our Lord’s discourse. Very few, indeed, could hear it. For at this time he was in a house, and the croud was so great that those who brought the paralytic man had to uncover the roof and let him down from it, Mark ii. 1.—4. But it would have injured the Doctor’s argument, to have referred to this circumstance. At what, then, did the *multitude marvel*? Certainly, at what they *saw*. This is the very language of that Gospel quoted by our author. They saw a man carried in on a bed, himself walk out, carrying his bed: and *when they saw, they marvelled, and glorified God, who had given such power unto men.* The miracle, of itself, proved nothing more than a communication of divine power. They

were not acquainted with the ground on which our Lord declared it to be wrought.

But although the multitude “had no idea of his claiming “any extraordinary power, as *inherent in himself*,” because they had not an opportunity of hearing the claim; it is evident that those had who did hear it. The Doctor himself says; “The Scribes and Pharisees, indeed, said within themselves, *This man blasphemeth*, ver. 3.” Now, it is probable, that they were almost the only persons who had an opportunity of making this reflection. As they always loved the chief seats, we cannot suppose that they would be standing without, while the vulgar were seated within. Accordingly, we learn that while there was not *room* for the multitude, “not so much as about the door, certain of “the Scribes were sitting there,” that is, in the house, Mark ii. 2. 6. Nay, *there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judea and Jerusalem*, Luke v. 17. Such a band most probably filled the house. Thus, it would appear that the *idea was entertained* by all who had an opportunity of hearing our Lord’s discourse. They said, *This man blasphemeth*. And had some modern *Doctors* been sitting with them, they must, according to their principles, have joined in the charge.

But we are told, that “the Jews called it *blasphemy*, to “pretend to be the Christ \*.” The proof brought to support this assertion, we may consider afterwards. But can Dr P. really believe, that these Scribes, Pharisees, and Doctors of the law, charged our Lord with blasphemy, on this occasion, because he seemed to claim the character of Messiah? For the honour of his *reason*, whatever else should suffer in the cause, we must scorn the idea. Could the carnal Jews apprehend, that Jesus pretended to be the Christ,

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\* Ibid.



by “ declaring the forgiveness of sin ? ” Did “ this high office ” correspond with their notions of the Messiah ? Did they not expect one, whose work had no respect whatsoever to sin, a temporal prince to subdue their outward enemies ? Or, will our author avail himself of his doctrine as to “ regal authority ? ” Will he choose to say, that they charged him with blasphemy, because he claimed that *declaratory* power, “ which always accompanies ” it ? But did not Dr P. know, when writing this, that two other Evangelists expressly give, as the reason of this accusation, that Jesus claimed what was still acknowledged by Jews as the peculiar prerogative of Deity, the power of forgiving sins ? *Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies ? Who can forgive sins but God only ?* Mark ii. 7. *Who is this that speaketh blasphemies ? Who can forgive sins but God alone ?* Luke v. 21. Is there one word concerning Christ or Messiah here ? while, according to the Doctor’s strange assertion, their question ought to have been, “ *Who can forgive sins but the Messiah only ?* ” Is there any unprejudiced man, who can doubt that the last words of these cavillers contain the reason of the preceding accusation ? or, that it was recorded by the Evangelists with this view ? These very Pharisees and Doctors would have blushed at such disingenuity. Is this the man who is *confident that he is a guide of the blind, a light of them who are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes ?* For all the noise made by Socinians about *reason*, one would think that they considered it as appropriated to a particular heresiarch ; and that the only *reason*, required of his disciples, were implicitly to receive his testimony, even when, as in this instance, directly contrary to that of the Spirit of inspiration. This is the *reason* of an Unitarian, to believe that when the Jews expressly charge our Saviour with blasphemy, for claiming what themselves say, belongs to God alone, they only mean

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to accuse him of pretending to be a *mere man*: as this, we are told, is the highest notion they entertained of the promised Messiah.

## C H A P. VIII.

*That Jesus declared his Deity by calling himself the I AM.*

**T**H A T God revealed himself by this name to his ancient people, our opponents cannot deny. When he appeared to Moses in the bush, and gave him a commission to the Israelites, Moses inquired how he should answer that question, which they would naturally propose, *What is his Name?* And God said unto Moses, *I AM THAT I AM: and thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you*, Ex. iii. 14. In his subsequent revelations, especially in these by the prophet Isaiah, he often used this name, by which he had so early made himself known. It certainly denotes the eternal, necessary, immutable and incomprehensible existence of God. If it appear, that Jesus revealed himself under this designation, in its proper meaning, as applied to God in the Old Testament, and that the faith of his disciples terminated on him in this respect; no reasonable doubt can remain, that he is *God over all*, and that he was acknowledged as such by those whom he employed to publish his doctrine to others.

We learn from one of “the three first Gospels,” that he promised his presence to his disciples, by appropriating to himself this divine title: *Where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there AM I in the midst of them*, Matt. xviii. 20. It is acknowledged by Dr. P. that this is a “passage which seems to suppose the omnipresence of Christ\*.”

This

\* Famil. Illustr. p. 26.



This is a considerable concession. For thus it is granted, that the great Prophet, whom his people were to *hear in all things, seemed* at least to claim divine perfection. If this did not really belong to him, he must have been unfit for his office, since he did not abstain from *all appearance of evil\**, of the greatest evil, the robbery of making himself equal with God. He could not, therefore, be a proper person for being heard *in all things*.

“But,” our author adds, “if we consider the whole of this passage, in which our Lord is speaking of the great power of which his disciples would be possessed, and especially of the efficacy of their prayers, we shall be satisfied that he could only mean, by this form of expression, to represent their power with God, when they were assembled as his disciples, and prayed so as became his disciples, to be the same as his own power with God; and God heard him always.” The whole that Dr P. seems to wish, in explaining this verse, is to deprive Jesus of his glory. If he can accomplish this, he cares not by what means; nor does he give himself any trouble whether he make sense of the passage or not. He will give all this power to the disciples, if he can withhold it from their Master. For “this form of expression,” he says, “represents *their* power with God.” Or if he leave any to him, it is no more than they possess. In this respect, he will not even allow the *pre-eminence* to him, to whom the Holy Ghost ascribes it *in all things*, Col. i. 18. According to this doctrine, any ordinary Christian can pray as effectually as Jesus Christ. But this clearly shows, how little account we are to make of the high-sounding words which Socinians use concerning the Saviour. They resemble the salutations of the soldiers, before they crucified him. Do they acknowledge him to be “the Son of God, his dear Son, the chief of his Sons, the interced-  
ing

\* 1 Thes. v. 22.

“ing High Priest, the one Mediator?” But, as the wise man says, *Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter.* The power of any Christian, praying in a proper manner, is “the same as his power with God.”

But as if Dr P. had been conscious that he was palming a sense upon the text that it could not bear; when describing the circumstances in which the intercession of the disciples is as powerful as that of Christ's, he finds it necessary to use some circumlocution:—“When they were assembled as his disciples, and prayed as became his disciples.” What part of his text does this refer to? why, surely, to that expression, *in my Name*. But our author wisely keeps it in the shade, as it must have spoiled the whole picture. For the lowest sense that can be put upon this phrase must imply, that he is in *some* respect superior to them; else why use his Name at all? Their own would do as well. But if, when thus “assembled as his disciples, and praying as becomes them,” that is, *gathered together in his Name*, their prayers are so effectual, they must have still less occasion for his being *in the midst* of them. And how is he *in the midst* of them? That the Doctor leaves to the reader himself to discover. Although we could believe the blasphemous absurdity, that their power with God is as great as his; we could never suppose this to be meant by that expression, *there am I in the midst of them*. For this language, as used in Scripture, always respects the presence of a Person\*. If his presence be still necessary, one would think that they had also some occasion for his *power*.

But as Jesus does not help them in prayer, we need not wonder that he does not *hear* them. For the Doctor adds; “That our Lord could not intend to speak of himself as “*the God who heareth prayer*, is evident from his speaking “of the Father, in this very place, as the person who was “to



“ to grant their petitions, ver. 19. *Again I say unto you,*  
“ *that if two of you shall agree on earth, as touching any*  
“ *thing, it shall be done for them, of my Father who is in*  
“ *heaven* \*.” But this is begging what the Doctor has yet  
to prove, that because the Father is God, the Son cannot  
be so. It is granted, that, according to the œconomy of re-  
demption, the gift of all blessings is primarily ascribed to  
the Father. But they all come immediately from Christ.  
For the Father hath *given all things into his hand*. There-  
fore our Lord informs them, how every blessing proceeds  
~~from the Father~~. It is by his own presence. Instead of  
there being any contradiction between ver. 19. and that im-  
mediately under consideration, according to the sense in  
which we view it, there is the most perfect harmony. In the  
former, our Lord merely declares the efficacy of social prayer.  
But, in the latter, he proceeds to shew the only way in  
which it is effectual. It must be in his name, that is, from  
a regard to his authority, and in the exercise of faith in him.  
Now, how a mere man can be the object of faith, let the  
Doctor shew at his leisure : and this may be the more diffi-  
cult, as Socinians are very shy of allowing this honour to  
God himself. But besides, the presence of Christ is pro-  
mised to the disciples, as their security for the gift of the  
blessing prayed for. And how a mere man in heaven can  
be always present with two or three on earth, so as to be  
really *in the midst of them*, is another difficulty which it be-  
longs to our author to solve. The connexion of the two  
verses undeniably shews, that the whole efficacy of the  
prayers of his people depends, not merely on their praying  
in his Name, but on their enjoying his presence. *It shall*  
*be done for them*. FOR, *where two or three, &c.*

It would be natural to suppose that he who answered pray-  
er, should also hear it. But we know that Jesus answers the  
prayers

\* Fam. Illustr. ib.

prayers of his people. For he says, John xiv. 13, 14. *Whatsoever ye shall ask in my Name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my Name, I will do it.* This passage explains the other. It shews how Christ is *in the midst of* his praying people. It is to do what they ask in his Name. Thus *the Father is glorified in the Son*, because the blessing asked is given, by the Son as Mediator, from the Father, œconomically considered as the fountain of all grace.

There are several things in these words, which shew that Christ claims the honour of Deity. He not only supposes his followers to be congregated in his Name, (language never used of a creature); but he says, *There am I*; evidently intimating, that he is present wherever this is the case. We cannot believe this, without believing that he is every where present. Here he uses that mode of speaking appropriated by God to himself, under the Old Testament. Εἰμι εἰμι exactly corresponds with 'אנכי אנכי, *There am I*, Isa. xlviii. 16. Although our author cannot perceive that “Christ intends to speak of himself as *the God that heareth prayer*,” this phrase must have been familiar to a Jewish ear. For it is the very language used by God, when he reveals himself in this character: *Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, HERE I AM*, Isa. lviii. 9.

They could be no less acquainted with the expression connected with it,—*in the midst of them*. For in a great variety of places in the Old Testament, God had thus declared his presence with his people; and his protection of them, his readiness to hear and to help them. When they were in the wilderness, next to their total destruction, the greatest judgment he could threaten was this, *I will not go up in the midst of them*, Ex. xxxiii. 3. Afterwards he said to them, *The Lord thy God walketh in the midst of thy camp, to deli-*



*ver thee, and to give up thine enemies before thee,* Deut. xxiii. 14. Here he immediately refers to the visible tokens of his presence in the tabernacle of the congregation, which was in the midst of the camp, and which prefigured his *tabernacling* in flesh *among* his people, (John i. 14.) From this very consideration, that *God is in the midst of her*, the church assures herself that *God shall help her, and that right early*, Psal. xlv. 5. This was her consolation amidst her greatest calamities: *Yet thou, O Lord, art in the midst of us, and we are called by thy Name*, Jer. xiv. 9. We need not observe, that there is a striking conformity between this passage and the words of our Saviour.

But this language does not merely respect God's typical presence amongst his people. It sometimes expressly regards the glorious Antitype. Therefore, when it is said, *God is in the midst of her*, the church evidently refers to *Immanuel*; for she adds, *The Lord of hosts is WITH US*, Psal. xlv. 7. This is declared to be the song of Zion in the gospel day; *Great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee*, Isa. xii. 6. Concerning the same period it is said; *The King of Israel, even JEHOVAH, is in the midst of thee; thou shalt not see evil any more*, Zeph. iii. 15. And again, *Ye shall praise the NAME of the Lord your God:—and ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the Lord your God, and none else*, Joel ii. 27. The proof given of this is so remarkable, that the disciples must have understood, when the Spirit was poured down, at least, that Christ was the glorious Person who spoke by Joel. For it immediately follows; *And it shall come to pass that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy*, ver. 28 \*.—Thus, the disciples being Jews, accustomed to this language, could not but understand

\* Compared with Acts ii. 16.—18.

derstand our Lord as promising his continual presence with them, as really as the divine presence had been enjoyed under the Old Testament; and indeed in that more excellent way foretold with respect to the New.

The Doctor also quotes Matt. xxviii. 20. *Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world*; and makes a feeble attempt to shew that these words convey no idea of power that may not belong to a mere creature. “Christ,” he says, “who is constituted *head over all things* to his church, “undoubtedly takes care of its interests, and attends to “whatever concerns his disciples; and *being with* a person, “and *taking care* of him are, in the language of scripture, “equivalent expressions. See Gen. xxi. 20. 22. xxviii 15. “xxxix. 2\*.” This is very true. But the Doctor forgets to tell his reader, that in the passages referred to, this *being with* a Person denotes *God’s taking care* of him; and that it is a care extending to all places where the Person may be, Gen. xxviii. 15. and to all actions, chap. xxi. 22. Now, this is all that we assert; with this difference only, that what is spoken, in the places cited, of an individual, is here promised to a collective body in succession.

Dr P. adds; “Besides, Christ having a near relation to “this earth, may even be *personally present* with his disciples when they little think of it.” I need not say, that by “being personally present,” he means the presence of his human nature only. Now, after this position, our author will find it very difficult to maintain his ground against the church of Rome. He is more nearly allied to her than he imagines. I should wish to know how he is pleased to dispose of such a passage as this? *He shall send Jesus Christ, —whom the heaven must receive, until the times of restitution of all things*, Acts iii. 20, 21. I might also refer to that, *Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth*

\* Famil. Illustr. p. 26.



*henceforth know we him no more*, 2 Cor. v. 16. But the Doctor has his answer ready. Christ may know his disciples *after the flesh*, or according to the human nature, when they do not know him in this way, that is, “when they little think of it.” Our author seems to differ much from the glorious Person of whom he thus speaks, who said to his hearers, *The flesh profiteth nothing*, John vi. 63. But the promise can be of little service to Dr P. even according to his own explanation. For it is not matter of faith with him, but only of probability: “Christ—*may* be personally present.” After this, however, he may spare his ridicule at the doctrine of *Transubstantiation*. For if Christ may be present as to his human nature, when his disciples “little think of it:” that is, when they have no sensible evidence of his presence, it will be difficult for the Doctor to prove, that he may not be present, as to his real body and blood, when his disciples can see, and feel, and taste nothing but bread and wine.

Thus, both Papists and Socinians hold a real bodily presence: and they perfectly agree in this important point, that Jesus may be really present, without sensible signs. He who believes this, has already swallowed the most unpalatable morsel in the doctrine of transubstantiation. For, according to the confession of Roman Catholics themselves, great as the miracle of the conversion of the wafer into the body and blood of Christ is, that of his being thus really present, without any evidence to the senses, is far more amazing and stupendous\*.

But the Doctor does not therefore assert the omnipresence of Christ. He has discovered that the disciples can do without this. “It is by no means necessary,” he says, “that he be personally present every where at the same time.” I suspected that matters would have this end, al-

\* Moore's View of Society and Manners in Italy, Let. 64.

though the Doctor began with informing us, that “ Christ “ attends to whatever concerns his disciples.” What is to become of those poor creatures, with whom he does not happen to be personally present, in the time of their necessity? How does he attend to their concerns? Let us hear our author. “ It is by no means necessary,—since God may “ communicate to him a power of knowing distant events, of “ which he appeared to be possessed when Lazarus was “ sick.” But, pray, what does the power of knowing distant events signify, without the power of assisting every believer? If but one be neglected, the work of the Mediator is imperfect. And if he is not every where present, either myriads must be neglected; or it remains to be proved, that the necessities of Christians are so disposed, that every one can wait till it come to his turn to be relieved. If Jesus has only the “ power of knowing distant events,” without that of succouring every individual, would he not be as well without it? Such a power can be of very little advantage to *the multitude of them who believe*: and it must rather give pain, than pleasure, to the possessor; because he must feel himself in the situation of one who knows the misery of a beloved friend, but by reason of distance, or multiplicity of engagements, can be of no service to him. How can he be *head over all things*, who can attend to some things only? When on some emergency, he happens to be on earth, if a greater occur, and the cry reach to heaven, what is to be done? Is the work performed by another? Then, the unity of the divine administration is destroyed; and something is taken out of his hand, *into whose hand all things* have been *given*. But how could *all power* be *given unto him*, who has only *some* power; nay, rather knowledge than power? The Doctor, indeed, seriously gives as ridiculous a description of him whom he calls his Saviour, as Elijah ironically gave of Baal. His disciples will need to



*cry aloud; for peradventure their Lord is on a journey,*  
1 Kings xviii. 27.

But after all, our author is not certain, whether God really communicates this “power of knowing distant events” to Jesus, or whether he had this “when Lazarus was sick:” His faith is of a very doubtful kind. It still rests in *may be’s* and *appearances*. “He *may* communicate.—He *appeared* to be possessed.” The only thing of which the Doctor seems certain, is, that, even in his *suppositions*, he does not grant too much honour to the Redeemer. “This *is certainly*,” he says, “no greater power than God may communicate to any of his creatures.” Pray, do take care, Sir, that nothing more be ascribed to the Son of God, than may be given to *any creature*, however low in the scale of being. You certainly *do God service*, in doing all in your power *against the name of Jesus of Nazareth*. Whatever be your error, it is not that of *honouring the Son as the Father*.

But it gives our author no trouble, that his comment is a flat denial of the text. Jesus says to his disciples, *Lo, I am with you ALWAYS*. Dr P. says, that he is with them *at times* only. Jesus gives his disciples reason to believe, that they constantly need his presence. “Nay,” says the Doctor, “this is by no means necessary.” Jesus assures them, that *all power is given unto him in heaven, and in earth*, which, one would think, implied divine power. Our author is persuaded, that Jesus is destitute of the most necessary power, that of being every where present, in order to relieve his disciples: and is not certain, if he has even that of knowing their necessities. Of this alone he is *certain*, that Jesus has *no* power given him that *may* not be “communicated to *any creature*” in heaven, or in earth.

Having illustrated the futility of Dr P.’s exposition, it may be proper to observe a few things concerning this pro-

mise. There is a remarkable correspondence between it and what we have in Hag. i. 13. *I am with you, saith the Lord.* The Evangelist uses the very words of the Seventy, with no variation, but that of arrangement. The Greek fairly expresses the force of that phraseology in the Hebrew, by which God still denotes his own presence in the church. We have the same promise, with an important enlargement, addressed to Zerubbabel and Joshua, chap. ii. 4, 5. *Be strong and work, for I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts, with the Word that I covenanted with you, when ye came out of Egypt; and my Spirit remaining among you.* This we have elsewhere shewn to be the literal translation of the passage \*. Now, either these words, *I am with you*, spoken by Christ to his disciples, have the same meaning as when delivered by Haggai, as the message of JEHOVAH; or, the servants of the Lord, in gospel times, have less encouragement than those whom he called to *work*, under the law.

The promise evidently imports a constant uninterrupted presence: *I am with you all days, or at all times.* There is not only the use of that singular and emphatic expression, *εγω ειμι*, *I am*, corresponding with the language of God under the Old Testament; but the present and future are at once connected: *I am with you—to the end of the world.* We have no example of the use of this language, but by a divine Person. Thus God expresses his immutable existence, by joining the present, sometimes with the past, and sometimes with the future; signifying, that how much soever the creature may change, there is no change with him. *From the time that it was, there I am*, Isa. xlviii. 16. *Even to your old age I am he*, chap. xlvi. 4. If Jesus be not God, he at least assumes his peculiar language. But he is, indeed, *the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever*, Heb. xiii. 8.

Besides, he introduces this promise with a note of admiration,

\* See above, p. 120, &c.



ration, *Lo!* This is the very manner in which God foretold that he would announce himself to his church in the last times. There is one prophecy that may well carry terror to the heart of a Socinian. *My Name continually every day is blasphemed. Therefore, my people shall know my Name; therefore they shall know, in that day, that I am he that doth speak, Behold, it is I;* or, rather, without the supplement, *Behold, or, Lo, I,* Isa. lii. 6. This seems to be pointed out as the very language that the God of Israel would utter, in the Gospel dispensation, as discovering himself to his people. For he is introduced as speaking with respect to the Gentiles, chap. lxxv. 1. *I said, Behold me, Behold me.* With fully as much propriety it may be read, *Behold, I.* For the word is the same in the Hebrew as in chap. lii. 6. and, in the Septuagint, it is translated in the very language used by the Evangelist Matthew, in recording the words of Jesus, ἰδὲ εἰμι. The expression seems to signify that this glorious *Speaker* was clearly to unfold his own excellency, that he was *one who should bear witness of himself*, John viii. 18. When the woman of Samaria said, *I know that Messiah cometh*, Jesus answered her in the very language of God by the prophet; *I, that speak unto thee, am* \*. And, truly, all his genuine disciples know that it is *he that doth speak* these comfortable words, *Lo, I am with you.* It is worthy of our notice, that immediately after that remarkable declaration in Isaiah, there follows a very pathetic description of the servants of Christ who were to go forth preaching the Gospel, *beginning at Jerusalem.—How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth*, ver. 7 †. as if *the Spirit*

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of

\* Εγώ εἰμι, ὁ λαλῶν σοι. John iv. 26. Isa. lii. 6. according to the Septuagint, is, Εγώ εἰμι αὐτός ὁ λαλῶν.

† Vid. Heidegger. Histor. Patriarch. vol. i. Exer. iii. f. 12.

of Christ would testify before hand the very circumstances in which he should expressly utter the language under consideration, to his servants, *Go ye, and teach all nations,—and lo, I am with you* ; and that all their strength for that work, and comfort in it, depended on this declaration.

I shall only add, that Jesus appropriates this divine language to himself, at the very time that he commanded the disciples to baptize all nations *in his Name*, as well as in that of the Father and Spirit. The force of this command may be afterwards illustrated.

On other occasions, our Lord speaks of himself in the same style. He said to the Jews, *If ye believe not that I am, ye shall die in your sins*, John viii. 24. He evidently speaks in this manner, with respect to his divine origin, which he declared to be unknown to the Jews, ver. 14. *Ye cannot tell whence I come*. Now, he could not have said this in truth, had he had no higher origin than his birth of Mary. For with this they were all acquainted, Matt. xiii. 55. He had said, *I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me*, ver. 16. language which we cannot conceive to be applicable, in any sense, to a creature. He had declared that they did not know his Father, and that if they had known him, they would have known his Father also, ver. 19. He had said, as in the verse immediately preceding, *I am from above*. That this directly respects his origin, we learn from the use of the same language by John Baptist ; who contrasts his own *earthly* origin with his, who, being *from above*, must of necessity be *above all*, chap. iii. 31. In the close of this discourse, our Lord uses that remarkable expression, *Before Abraham was, I am*, ver. 58. It is clear that he proclaims himself to be a divine Person. For when Abraham is spoken of, the verb *γινωμαι* is used. But *εἰμι* is introduced to express the existence of the Saviour. The first properly denotes such a being as implies beginning, and refers to birth



birth or creation. But the other is always used, when self-existence is meant. The same distinction is here observed, as in the introduction to this Gospel. Whereas the Evangelist says, *In the beginning  $\omega\upsilon$ , was the Word*, the existence of all creatures is very differently expressed; *All things  $\epsilon\upsilon\epsilon\gamma\epsilon\tau\omicron$ , were made by him*. Thus our Lord opposes his own eternal *existence* to the *making*, or, which is the same, to the *birth* of Abraham. He also speaks of his own existence in the present time, while that of Abraham is expressed in the past: *Before Abraham was made, or, born, I am*. Thus, he opposes the immutability of his existence to the changeable nature of the creature. Here there seems to be a tacit, though striking reply to their own testimony concerning Abraham and the prophets, ver. 53. *Art thou greater than our father Abraham, who is dead? And the prophets are dead*. It was a full answer to the question subjoined, *WHOM makest thou thyself?* It is as if he had said, “By your own confession, the most that can be said of Abraham, is, that he *was*; but, in every period of time, it may justly be said of me, that *I am*.” These words must be viewed in their connexion with the awful declaration he had formerly made, ver. 24. *If ye believe not that I am, ye shall die in your sins*. They were so to believe this, as to be assured in their minds that he existed before Abraham. This faith alone could preserve them from condemnation.

To say, that this is a mere *enallage*, is ridiculous. For we cannot suppose so unusual a change of the present for the past, without a very peculiar reason. Some have pretended, that our Lord here speaks of his being *before Abraham*, as to the decree. But it has been justly urged in reply, that the word  $\epsilon\iota\mu$  *am*, when used absolutely, denotes *actual* existence, and that this is confirmed by the use of the pronoun  $\epsilon\gamma\omega$ , *I*; that there is nothing in the context to shew that the language of our Saviour is not to be understood absolutely; that, as the question proposed by the Jews respected his per-

sonal existence, whether he had *seen Abraham*, if his answer did not also respect this, it was not in point; and that, as it was our Lord's design to shew that he was older than Abraham, if he only declared, that he was fore-ordained in the purpose of God, before Abraham's birth, it proved nothing; because, in the same sense, every one of his hearers might have claimed a priority\*.

To suppose that Jesus meant to evade a direct answer to their question, is to do him the greatest injury. It is to charge him with the profanation of a solemn oath. For he prefaces his declaration with these words, *Amen, amen*; which he never uses, but on the most important occasions and interesting subjects. For this was the Jewish mode of swearing; and as used by him, expresses his most solemn testimony, as *the Amen, the faithful and true witness*. Here also we find him expressing himself in language never employed, either by prophets, or by apostles; *Verily, verily, I say unto you*. The prophets had always exhibited God as the speaker. Their common introduction was, *Thus saith the Lord*. The apostles never delivered a message in their own name. But Jesus still expressed himself in this manner.

The vanity of another Socinian subterfuge, that our Lord means to assert his existence, before Abraham *was made*, — *the father of many nations*, has been fully illustrated by Dr Whitby, in his exposition of this passage. But it is so egregiously mean, that the Jews themselves, though, for the honour of their father Abraham, they had inclined to torture our Saviour's language, would have blushed to have used it.

Dr P. gives another view of these words. “The meaning of this passage,” he says, “clearly is, that Abraham  
“*foresaw* the day of Christ, and that Christ was the subject  
of

\* Vide Lampe in loc.



“ of prophecy before the times of Abraham \*.” It is sometimes of great use, in a bad cause, for a man to seem confident of its goodness. But matters are not quite so *clear* as the Doctor apprehends. For the question, to which this was the answer, was not, “ Hath Abraham seen thee ?” but, *Hast thou seen Abraham ?* And surely, there is a considerable difference between the two. What Abraham saw, was the day of Christ. But if Christ’s reply has any relation to the question, or any meaning ; what he saw, was Abraham *himself*. The learned gentleman, in his view, blends two things totally different. The Jews seem to have at first misunderstood our Saviour, when he said, *Abraham saw my day* ; as if he had asserted, that he had seen Abraham’s day. Therefore they said, *Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham ?* But Jesus, in his reply, shews them that what they inferred by mistake, was true in itself. Had he said, “ Before Abraham was, *I was*,” it would have been less ridiculous to have explained it of his being “ the subject of prophecy.” But what does our author make of that expression, *I am* ? However, though it had been, *I was*, the sense imposed by him would still be extremely unnatural. What would the Jews have thought of John Baptist, had he told them that he was before Jeremiah, secretly meaning that he had been prophesied of by Isaiah ? If the learned writer have no *clearer* illustrations of scripture to offer to the public, for the honour of the word of God, and for the credit of his own understanding, which perhaps weighs as much with him, he had better confine himself to studies that seem more suitable to his genius.

He adds ; “ This saying of our Lord is illustrated by “ what the author of the epistle to the Hebrews says concerning all the ancient worthies, *viz.* that they *all died in*  
“ *faith*,

\* Famil. Illustr. p. 40.

“*faith, not having received the promises, but having seen*  
 “*them afar off*” In this manner, therefore, Abraham saw  
 “the day of Christ.” This quotation, indeed, illustrates  
 the *first* “saying of our Lord,”—*He saw it, and was glad.*  
 But what comes of the *second*? *Before Abraham was, I am.*  
 Though Abraham saw the day of Christ *afar off*, what is  
 this to the purpose of Christ’s seeing Abraham, though he  
 did not seem to be *fifty years old*?

*Dr Priestley’s objection to the argument from the use of the  
 title, I A M, considered.*

**T**H E only notice that our author directly takes of this  
 remarkable expression, is in the following observa-  
 tion. “As to those who think that our Lord meant to in-  
 “timate that he was truly and properly God because he  
 “used that expression *I am*, by which the true God announ-  
 “ced himself to Moses, they will perhaps be sensible how  
 “little stress is to be laid upon it, when they are informed,  
 “that, though the same phrase occurs very often in the  
 “history of Christ, our translators themselves in every place  
 “excepting this, render it by *I am he*, that is, I am the  
 “Christ. It is used in this sense in the 24th verse of this  
 “Chapter, *If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in*  
 “*your sins.* And again in the 28th verse, *When ye shall*  
 “*(have) lift up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I*  
 “*am he* \*.” This, then, is the mighty proof of “the  
 “little stress to be laid upon it,”—the authority of a trans-  
 lation. Can this be the same person, who, in the page im-  
 mediately preceding, quarrels with the translation of that  
 expression in Phil. ii. 6. rendered *equal with God.* *Quan-*  
*tum*

\* Famil. Illustr. p. 41.



*tum mutatus ab illo* ? But this gentleman can, either contradict our venerable translators point-blank, or argue from their version, as if they had been inspired ; just as it suits the present purpose. It is evident, however, that they wish the reader to observe, that the pronoun *he* is a supplement, as it is inserted in different characters from the rest of the verse. The Doctor is mistaken, when he asserts that “ our translators, in every place, excepting this, render the expression, *I am he*.” For in three different places, it is rendered, *It is I*. When Jesus came walking on the waters, it was thus he rebuked the fear of the disciples ; *Be not afraid* *εγω ειμι*, literally, *I am*, Matt. xiv. 27. Mark vi. 50. John vi. 20. Here he evidently utters the language in which God was wont to address their fathers ; *Fear not, I am with thee*, Isa. xli. 10. He declares himself to be a Person of such dignity and power that his presence ought to remove all unbelieving fear.

Dr P. cannot refuse, that “ the true God announced himself to Moses” by that expression which our Lord uses. The learned Whitby, before he became Socinian, understood this language as relating to the Deity of Christ. Finding, however, that it is mentioned as an expression common with the *false Christs* he offers the following solution of the difficulty. “ As for the phrase, *εγω ειμι*, *I am*, let it be noted, that in the other Evangelists it is only used to signify what the *false Christs* would say, and so can have no other import than *I am the Christ* ; but in this Gospel it seems to signify, *I am the Son of God* ; for he that saith *I am*, &c \*.”

But I am willing to give all its force to Dr P.’s objection, and to admit that, whenever Christ uses this expression, it respects him even as Messiah. Yet I must refuse the Doctor’s inference, that therefore it “ does not mean the eternal  
“ God.”

\* Paraph. on John viii. 58.

“God.” For the only Messiah exhibited in scripture, is *God manifested in the flesh*. The *mission* of the Son is always assumed, by Socinians, as a sufficient objection to his equality with the Father. But as they allow that JEHOVAH uses this language in the Old Testament, if it appear that he uses it in the character of one *sent*, it must follow that the objection receives a full answer from God himself.

It may certainly be laid down as a first principle, that he who spoke to Moses was the true God. For the Doctor has acknowledged that “the true God announced himself “to Moses by that expression *I am*.” But the Holy Spirit informs us, that he who spoke in this manner was an Angel: *The Angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire, out of the midst of a bush*, Ex. iii. 2. It cannot be said that, although an Angel appeared, it was JEHOVAH himself who spoke. For the glorious Speaker commands Moses to say: *JEHOVAH the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared unto me*, ver. 16. The Person that *spoke*, was the same that *appeared* unto Moses; and he who appeared, was *the God of Abraham*. Moses was fully convinced of this. For *he was afraid to look upon God*, ver. 6. Socinians, by refusing that this Angel was a divine Person, produce that very objection which Moses expected to meet with from the ignorant and stubborn Israelites. *They will say, JEHOVAH hath not appeared unto thee*, chap. iv. 1. But that he might be able to make an effectual reply to it, God gives him the power of working miracles, adding as the reason of the gift;---*that they may believe that JEHOVAH, the God of their fathers, hath appeared unto thee*, ver. 5.

It is well known, that the Septuagint was commonly used among the Jews, at the time that the New Testament was wrote. Now, it deserves our particular attention, that our Lord adopts that very phraseology concerning himself, Rev.



i. 8: that is used by the Seventy to express the language in “ which the true God announced himself to Moses.” In both places we have that expression, *Εγω ειμι ο υς*. But Jesus, knowing that this was the very language by which the Jews denoted the true and self-existent God, if this character does not belong to him, intrenched on the honours of Deity, by arrogating them to himself. I need not take time to shew that Jesus is the speaker in Rev. i. 8. This is undeniable from his claiming the same characters with those unquestionably claimed by him ver. 11. 17. chap. ii. 8. xxii. 13.

An Angel was afterwards promised as the leader of Israel. God said; *Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee unto the place which I have promised.* By way of distinction, God calls him *his* Angel; *Mine Angel shall go before thee*, Ex. xxiii. 20. 23. From the account given of this Angel, in the book of Exodus, we might safely conclude that it was he who appeared to Moses, and revealed himself as the I AM. The work assigned him was that of bringing Israel into the place which God had prepared. But the Angel who appeared to Moses in a flame of fire claimed this work as his: *I am come down--- to bring them up into a good land*, chap. iii. 8. vi. 8. The characters given him are divine: *My Name is in him*, chap. xxiii. 21. His *voice* is spoken of as the same with God's, ver. 22. chap. xix. 5:

But we have clear evidence from scripture, that the Angel promised was he who appeared unto Moses. For Stephen declares concerning this Prophet, that *God sent him a ruler and deliverer by the hand of the Angel who appeared to him in the bush*, Acts vii. 35. This does not merely signify that God employed this Angel in the mission of Moses; but that Moses was *in the hand* of this Angel, as long as he sustained the characters mentioned, that is, as long as he was in the church in the wilderness. Therefore, when it is afterwards

afterwards said, *This is he that was in the church in the wilderness, with the Angel who spake to him in the mount Sinai*, ver. 38. though the latter expression may more immediately respect the delivering of the law, yet it may be extended to the revelation formerly made to Moses by this Angel in the same mountain. For concerning this Stephen had said; *There appeared to him in the wilderness of mount Sinai, an Angel of the Lord in a flame of fire in a bush*, ver. 30. Although it should be urged, that the giving of the law alone is meant, still it would follow, that he who *spake to Moses, face to face*, as God, sustained a delegated character; and that this was the faith of true Israelites in the days of Stephen.

It is evident that both Moses and the Israelites considered the Angel, who was promised them, as divine. When they provoked God by worshipping the golden calf, he threatened that he would *not go up in the midst of them*, Exod. xxxiii. 3. The reason of the intercession of Moses, and of the mourning of the people, was not that God had formerly promised his own presence, but now that of an Angel only; nor that he had formerly promised the uncreated Angel, but now a created one. For he had never engaged to give them his presence, otherwise than by *sending* an Angel. With this both Moses and Israel were satisfied, accounting it the divine presence. But still there was an important difference. God had formerly promised this Angel to *keep them in the way*, and to *bring* them to Canaan. All that he now promises is, that he shall *go before* them, to drive out their enemies. He leaves the work of *leading* them, and of *bringing* them into that land, on Moses himself, Exod. xxxii 34. refusing to *go up in the midst of them*, in the person of this Angel. Therefore Moses addresses God in the following terms; *See, thou sayest unto me, Bring up this people, and thou hast not let me know whom thou wilt send*



*send with me*, chap. xxxiii. 12. Nothing can be more plain, than that Moses had still understood the original promise, as signifying that the people of God were to enjoy his presence immediately, and yet by one *sent*.

His language is very emphatic ; *Thou hast not let me know* **אשר את**, *the person whom thou wilt send*. We have the same expression, .Gen. xlv. 1. *He commanded*, **אשר את**, literally, *the — who was over his house*, that is, as we render it, *the steward of his house*. The Lord answered ; *My presence shall go*, ver 14. The term here used is plainly a personal designation, denoting that Angel whom God had promised, before the people offended him. For this illustrious Messenger is elsewhere called *the Angel of his presence*, or *face*, Isa. lxiii. 9. But, in the person of this Angel, the people of God were to enjoy his own *presence*. For this promise was merely a renovation of that formerly made, *I will send an Angel before thee, to keep thee*, &c. and the latter was equivalent to his saying, that he would *go up in the midst of them*, Exod. xxxiii. 3. The same expression is elsewhere used, to denote the personal presence of a creature : *I counsel—that thou go up to battle in thine own person*, literally, *that thy presence go up*, 2 Sam. xvii. 11.

This divine Messenger might be called the *presence* or *face* of God, or *the Angel of his face*, for different reasons. He might receive these designations, because of his going before Israel in the appearance of a pillar of cloud and fire. For as a man is known by his face, God made known the truth of his presence in the camp of Israel by this symbol. Indeed, it would seem to be in this sense only that Moses speaks of God being seen by his people *face to face*. *They have heard*, says he of the heathen nations, *that thou Lord art among this people, and that thou Lord art seen face to face, and that thy cloud standeth over them*, &c. Num. xiv. 14. Deut. v. 4. They saw him *face to face*, no other way than  
by

by *his cloud standing over them*. For they saw no similitude, Deut. iv. 12. 15. He might also be thus denominated, because in him the divine perfections were displayed, God's *Name being in him*. This language certainly signifies; that there was an intimacy between this Angel and him who sent him, to which no other was admitted. Besides, it would appear that the Deity never assumed any visible appearance, but in the person of this Angel, John v. 37. Perhaps, we may add as another reason, that all the grace of God was communicated to his people through him; Numb. vi. 25. Psal. lxxx. 7. Isa. lxiii. 9. That divine person, who appeared to Abraham in the likeness of human nature, seems to be called the *Face of God*: The two Angels who attended him, inform Lot that the cry of Sodom was *waxen great before the face of JEHOVAH*, Gen. xix. 13. It was the same glorious Person whom Lot intreated, in whose sight he found grace, who was merciful to him, ver. 19. and accepted him in his prayer, ver. 21. and who, as JEHOVAH, *rained fire and brimstone from JEHOVAH*, on the cities of the plain, ver 24. It needs not seem strange, that Moses was so earnest to have this Angel, called *the Face of God*, to go with him: as it appears that he was the object of his worship. For what we have rendered, *Moses besought the Lord his God*, literally is, *Moses besought the Face of JEHOVAH his God*, Exod. xxxii. 11. And he did so at the very time that God threatened to withdraw his face.

Did this Angel appear in the pillar of cloud and fire? The *Branch of JEHOVAH* is promised to the Church, under the New Testament, as a pillar of the same kind, Isa. iv. 2. 5. And we know that the Son is *the brightness of glory*, Heb. i. 3. Did this Angel *go before* the Church? Jesus is given as a *Leader to the people*, Isa. lv. 4. God said, *Behold, I send an Angel before thee,—to bring thee into the place which I have prepared*, Exod. xxiii. 20. Jesus appropriates this work to himself,



himself, with respect to that better Canaan of which the other was merely a type. *I go to prepare a place for you.—I will come again, and receive you unto myself*, John xiv. 2, 3. When God says, *My Face shall go*, he adds, *and I will give you rest*. This is the very work of our Lord Jesus. He says, *I will give you rest*. And his rest is unspeakably superior to that given by the typical Jesus, Heb. iv. 8. It is rest for the soul, Matt. xi. 28, 29. Were the divine perfections displayed in that Angel? And is not Jesus *the image of the invisible God, the express image of the Father's person*? Was the Angel of God's presence admitted to peculiar intimacy with him? And is not *the only-begotten still in the bosom of the Father*? John i. 18. Was all the grace of God communicated through him? We know that God is propitious to us, only as he *looks on the face of his Messiah*, Psal. lxxxiv. 9. The greatest token of his reconciliation to Israel was his promising that his *Face* should go: and the greatest token of his love to the New Testament Church, is the uninterrupted presence of Jesus *to the end of the world*. For *he is our peace*. In a word, the whole administration of the Church, from the fall till the appearance of the Messiah, was committed to this Angel. For *the Angel of his face or presence saved them: in his love, and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old*. But this was the Son of God. For, not only is this his proper work under the gospel; but it is granted even by Socinians, that, in the last prophecy of the Old Testament, he is described as *the Angel of the covenant, whom his people delighted in*, Mal. iii. 1. Now, they knew no other under this character, than that Angel who swore unto Abraham, and who claimed the covenant as his, Judg. ii. 1. In the same passage he seems to be called *the Face of the Lord*. For it is foretold with respect to John his harbinger; *Behold, I send my Messenger, and he shall prepare the way be-*

*fore me*, literally, *before my Face*. This language is retained by Zacharias, when prophetically addressing his son; *Thou shalt go before the Face of the Lord* \*. It was promised concerning this Angel, that he should *suddenly come to his temple*. And he did come suddenly. For Jesus, on his first visit to this holy place, after the commencement of his ministry, expelled all who defiled it, John ii. 13. None of them could *abide the day of his coming*, or *stand when he appeared*, Mal. iii. 2.

Thus, we have a key to the true meaning of a great variety of passages, in which we read of the *Face* of God, of the *shining* or *lifting up* of his *countenance*; and of the many prayers of the ancient church for this blessing. As the language of believers, or at least, as that of *the Spirit of Christ*, and as *written for our instruction*, they undoubtedly refer to the incarnation of the Son of God. Particularly, in the eightieth Psalm, there is a frequent repetition of this prayer, *Cause thy Face to shine*: as expressing the great object in view; and in the close, the church expressly declares who is meant by this designation, and what is the blessing intreated in these words. She refers to the Messiah under another character: *Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, upon the Son of man, whom thou madest strong for thyself*, ver. 17.

It is highly probable, that the same glorious Messenger is called God's *Way*. For Moses having said, *Thou hast not let me know the Person whom thou wilt send*, immediately adds, *Make me to know thy way*, Ex. xxxiii. 12, 13. He substitutes this expression in the room of that blank which he had left in his complaint, and places before it the same demonstrative and emphatic particle: *Thou hast not let me know* אֵת אֲשֶׁר, *the Person whom thou wilt send*.---*Make me to know* אֵת דֶּרֶכְךָ, as it may be rendered, *that thy*

\* Προ προσώπῳ μου, Septuag. Προ προσώπῳ τοῦ Κυρίου, Luke i. 76.



*thy way.* That Angel, who is the *Face* of JEHOVAH, might by a beautiful figure be also called his *Way*, because of the office allotted to him, which was to *lead* the Israelites, and to *keep them in the way.* For *the Lord went before them in the pillar of cloud, to lead them the way,* Ex. xiii. 21. We know that Jesus sustains the double character of a *Leader* and a *Way*; nay, that he is a *Way* possessed of such virtue, that *the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein;* Isa. xxxv. 8. He expressly calls himself *the Way*: and it can scarcely be supposed that he does so without a reference to the typical pillar, and to that conducting Angel whose symbol it was; especially as he takes this designation at the very time that he apparently alludes to the work of this Messenger, in *bringing ancient Israel to the place prepared for them.* *I go,* he says, *to prepare a place for you.---I am the Way,* John xiv. 2. 6. Moses said, *Make me to know thy Way, that I may know thee, and that I may find grace in thy sight.* Jesus says to his disciples, *I am the Way.---No man cometh unto the Father, but by me. If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also,* ver. 6, 7 \*.

S. 2

But

\* A variety of passages in the Old Testament might be mentioned, in which the term *way* seems to denote a person. As for God, *his Way is perfect, the Word of the Lord is tried; he is a buckler to all those that trust in him,* Psal. xviii. 30. That the Messiah is here called God's Way, would appear from the following clause. For according to the natural construction of the original, it is *the Word of JEHOVAH* who is *a buckler.* Psalm lxvii. evidently refers to the Gospel dispensation; as it respects the conversion of the Gentiles. The Psalmist first prays that God would cause his *Face* to shine. Here we have the very term which God uses, when he says, *My presence shall go.* He then declares the end for which he craves this blessing; *that thy Way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all people,* ver. 2. Now, *the saving health* of God can be *known* only through him who is *the Way.* Indeed, that very word is here rendered *saving health*, which in many other places is translated *salvation*, particularly in Isa. xlix. 6. where it confessedly denotes

Jesus

But as this particular view is not immediately connected with the argument, I shall proceed to consider some other passages in which the divine Name I AM is given to One sent.

It occurs in this sense in Isa. xlviii. 16. formerly referred to; *Come ye near unto me, hear ye this: I have not spoken in secret from the beginning, from the time that it was there am I, and now the Lord God and his Spirit hath sent me* \*. The Speaker declares that he is One sent and yet the self-existent God, whose hand laid the foundation of the earth, ver. 13. and the Goel or Kinsman-Redeemer of Israel, ver. 17. a designation which can only belong to *the Word made flesh*. He not only describes himself as sent, but proclaims his mission in the character of a *Speaker*. This, we know, is an eminent branch of the office of Messiah. He even appropriates all the Revelations made to the church, from her first existence, as immediately his †. He declares the publicity

Jesus our *Way*. It is prophesied concerning the Gospel church; *Thy teachers shall not be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers. And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the Way, walk ye in it*, chap. xxx. 20, 21. It is undoubtedly the work of the servants of Christ to point him out as *the Way*. The teachers of the church, in primitive times, were thus employed. They exhorted the disciples, as they had *received Christ Jesus the Lord, so to walk in him*, Col. ii. 6. And they could only *walk in him*, as having *received* him as their *Way*. It is promised; *An highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness*, Isa. xxxv. 8. Now, *the way into the holiest is through the blood of Jesus*; and it is *consecrated*, Heb. x. 20. so as to appear to be indeed *the way of holiness*. The Lord said by another prophet, *Where is the good way? and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls*, Jer. vi. 16. This is just what he promised, when Moses desired to know his *Way*. *My Face shall go, and I will give you rest*. And we have seen that this is what Jesus promises, when inviting sinners to himself, Matt. xi. 28, 29.

\* The words may be read with equal justice to the original. *The Lord God hath sent me and his Spirit*.

† Vid. Heidegger. Hist. Patriarch. Part I. Exerc. iii. s. 12, &c.



blicity of these, the more to aggravate their incredulity. This very language does the Messenger of the covenant apply to himself: *I spake openly to the world---and in secret have I said nothing*, John xviii. 20 \*.

Although *εγω ειμι* had been still rendered *I am he*, it would have expressed no more than what is often particularly declared, in the language of prophecy, concerning this illustrious Messenger, who is the I AM. For the same person says, Isa. xliii. 13. *I am he*: and he connects this with the following characters, *I am the first and the last*. These he urges, in addressing his church, as affording the most powerful argument against fear, chap. xliv. 6---8. *I am the first and the last---Fear ye not*. Now, these very characters does Jesus appropriate to himself, and apply in the same manner, Rev. i. 17. *Fear not, I am the first and the last*. In the prophecy of Isaiah, this language is given as that of JEHOVAH, the King and Redeemer of Israel; besides whom there is no God: *Thus saith JEHOVAH, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, JEHOVAH of hosts, I am the first and the last, and besides me there is no God*. Therefore, either Jesus is a divine Person, or he was chargeable with robbery in assuming these characters. Either, it was he who, under the Old Testament, uttered this language, and who was the King and Redeemer of Israel; or, the Gospel church, in her privileges, is infinitely inferior to the Jewish. For Jesus is her King and Redeemer. Either, these characters are used with such peculiarity as to denote that they belong to God only, and that there is no God besides that Being to whom they are immediately ascribed; or they have no meaning, as here introduced. If the former be true, Jesus must be truly God: for they belong to him.

This expression, *I am he*, is so evidently used as emphatically

S 3

\* *Εν κρυπτῷ ελάλησα υδεν*. This is nearly the same with the version of the Seventy, *Ουκ εν κρυφῳ λελαληκα*.

tically denoting God, that many learned men have considered the pronoun **אני** as one of his names \*. It seems especially to denote the immutability of the divine nature, as in Psalm. cii. 27. *But thou art the same, or thou art HE.* Its emphasis is sometimes particularly expressed in the Greek, and applied to our Lord, as in Heb. i. 12. *Σὺ δὲ ὁ αὐτός εἰ;* and chap. xiii. 8. *Jesus Christ, ὁ αὐτός, the same, yesterday, &c.* Had this been written in Hebrew, we may be assured from the translation of Psal. cii. 27. according to the Septuagint, that it would have been **אני**.

The same emphatic expression is used in another passage formerly referred to, Isa. lii. 6. *They shall know, in that day, that I am he that doth speak, or he, the Speaker.* We have seen that this belongs to Jesus. Here he is evidently declared in his character as *Messiah*. For it is Jesus who spoke on earth, Heb. ii. 3. and who now *speaketh from heaven*, chap. xii. 25. Our Lord's language, even with respect to those false Christs who should appear, is so remarkable, that we are under the necessity of believing, that the ancient Jews understood the words of the prophet, *that I am he*, of the Messiah, and as expressing the very manner in which he would announce himself. Thus our Lord says, *Many shall come in my Name, saying, ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι, that I am*, Luke xxi. 8. This is a literal translation of the expression in Isaiah †; nay, the very terms in which it is translated by the Seventy. In that solemn declaration, *When ye have lift up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I AM HE, and that I do nothing of myself, but as my Father hath taught me, I SPEAK these things*, our Lord seems to repeat the very words of the prophecy; *They shall know in that day, that I AM HE that doth SPEAK ‡.* It is also said, *My people shall know my*

\* Vid. Pfeifferi Dif. Script. Loc. Cent. 4. l. 23.

† **אני ה' אלהי**

‡ *Τότε γνωσεσθε ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι, καὶ—ταῦτα λαλῶ, John viii. 28. Γνωσεται ὁ λαὸς μὲν τὸ ὄνομα μὲν ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ, ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ λαλῶν. Septuag.*



*my Name.* What is this Name? *The Speaker.* This is the very designation given him, Heb. xii. 25. *τον λαλουντα.*

I shall only add a proof that the ancient Jews, while they understood the title I AM as proper to God, applied it to the Messiah. Moses, in his last song, introduces JEHOVAH as saying; *See now that I, even I am he, and there is no God with me : I kill, and I make alive ; I wound, and I heal : neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand,* Deut. xxxii. 39. This text is thus rendered by Jonathan ; “ When the Word of the Lord shall be manifested to re-  
“ deem his people, he shall say to all people : See now, that  
“ I am he, who am, who have been, and who shall be,” the very language of our Saviour, Rev. i. 8. “ and there is no  
“ other God besides me. I in my revenge do kill, and I do  
“ thoroughly make alive my people of the house of Israel,  
“ and I do heal them in the latter days.” As this blessing has been referred to *the latter days*, by which the Jews still understand the time of the Messiah’s appearance, it has been justly inferred that it is he who is here called the Word.

It is undeniable that the name JEHOVAH is equivalent to that of I AM. Therefore, when God had, under the latter designation, given to Moses his commission, he repeats it in this manner; *Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, JEHOVAH, the God of your fathers,—hath sent me unto you,* Ex. iii. 15. And again; *Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am JEHOVAH,* chap. vi. 6. Of consequence, all the arguments formerly brought to prove that the name JEHOVAH is properly given to one in the character of an Angel, with equal force of evidence demonstrate his title to the name I AM.

That one is revealed as JEHOVAH who *sends*, and another as JEHOVAH who is *sent*, is as certain as any truth contained in the sacred volume. For *thus saith JEHOVAH of hosts, After the glory hath he SENT me unto the nations*  
S 4 *that*

*that spoiled you ; for he that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye. For behold, I will shake mine hand upon them, and they shall be a spoil to their servants : and ye shall know that JEHOVAH of hosts hath SENT me. Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion : for lo, I COME, and I will DWELL in the midst of thee, saith JEHOVAH. And many nations shall be joined to JEHOVAH in that day, and shall be MY people : and I will DWELL in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that JEHOVAH of hosts hath SENT me unto thee, Zach. ii. 8.—11.*

This passage evidently respects the Gospel dispensation. For *many nations* are to be *joined to the Lord*. It is equally clear that the Speaker is JEHOVAH, and yet *sent* ; that he who is thus *sent* by JEHOVAH, is the avenger of God's people, *comes* undoubtedly in his incarnation, and *dwells in the midst* of them \*, as JEHOVAH ; that they are *his* people ; and that they know both that he *is* JEHOVAH, and that he is *sent* by JEHOVAH. If this be not the obvious meaning of the passage, I, in the name of all who love our Lord Jesus Christ, challenge Dr P. to shew what other it can bear.

From the preceding observations, and also from what we have formerly seen, when inquiring into that character, *the Angel of the Lord*, it appears that this glorious Messenger, even under the Old Testament, performed all the work proper to the Messiah, and ascribed to Jesus under the New, as far as the circumstances of that dispensation would admit of it. Did the Messiah come in our nature ? This Angel often came in the likeness of it, and was at times supposed to be truly man Gen. xxxii. 24. Judg. xiii. 16. Did Jesus declare that he was sent, and yet equal with the Father ?

This

\* So striking is the resemblance between the language of the Evangelist John, and that of the prophecy, especially as rendered in the Septuagint that we can scarcely suppose that he did not mean to allude to it Εσκηνωσεν εν ημιν, John i. 14 Κατασκηνωσεν εν μεσω αυ, Sept. Both expressions properly signify *dwelling as in a tabernacle*.



This Angel did the same, Zech. ii. 11. Did the Son of God become *one* with those whom he was to *sanctify*? Heb. ii. 11. The character of a *Kinsman-Redeemer* to his people was sustained by this Angel, Gen. xlviii. 16. Was it the work of Jesus to reveal the whole will of God to the church? The same work was performed by this Angel, before the coming of the Messiah. Is Christ promised to the Gospel church as *the Angel of the covenant*, nay, as himself *the covenant of the people*? Isa. xlii. 6. It was this Angel who made the same covenant with Abraham and his seed, Judg. ii. 1. It has been seen that the character of a *Leader* belongs equally to both. Is the one *the Captain of our salvation*? Heb. ii. 10. The other was *Captain of the hosts of the Lord*, Josh. v. 14. Is Jesus a Saviour? The Angel of God's presence saved his ancient people. Is *the grace of our Lord Jesus exceeding abundant*? The same grace was conspicuous in this glorious Person. For *in his love, and in his pity* he redeemed them, Isa. lxiii. 9. Does it belong to Christ to forgive sin? Acts v. 31. The same was the prerogative of this Angel. For he said to Joshua the high priest, *I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee*, Zech. iii. 4. Are Christians *accepted in the Beloved*? It was this Angel who rendered the sacrifice of ancient believers acceptable, Judg. vi. 21. Is it the work of the Messiah to intercede for his church? The same office was sustained by this Angel. He prayed for Joshua, that he might be delivered from Satan, Zech. iii. 2. just as our Lord did for Peter, Luke xxii. 32. Does it belong to Jesus effectually to *bless* his people, in *turning them from their iniquities*? Acts iii. 26. The same work was claimed by the Angel of JEHOVAH. For he said to Abraham, *In blessing I will bless thee*, Gen. xxii. 17. and he blessed Jacob in the very place where he presented his supplication, chap. xxxii. 29.

Is Jesus the Deliverer of his people? Rom. xi. 26. No  
wise

wife inferior was the character of this Angel. For he was celebrated as *encamping around them that feared him, and delivering them*, Psal. xxxiv. 7. Had the Messiah a right to send forth messengers in his Name, to preach the gospel to others? It was the Angel of the Lord who sent Moses to the Israelites in Egypt, Ex. iii. 2. 14. and other prophets to their posterity, 1 Chro. xxi. 18. Did Jesus communicate the Spirit to church members? This glorious Messenger, in former times, *put his Spirit in them*, Isa. lxiii. 11. Is the whole administration of providence in the hand of Christ? Equally important was the trust of this Angel, Gen. xxi. 18. xxii. 17. Are angels employed by Jesus, as his ministers, for making known his will, Rev. xxii. 16. and for accomplishing the purposes, both of providence and grace? Heb. i. 14. They occupied the same station under the Angel of JEHOVAH, Zech. ii. 3, 4. i. 11. vi 8. Does Jesus *smite the nations with his sharp sword, and rule them with a rod of iron?* Rev. xix. 15. He carries on the same work with that Angel of the Lord who smote the Assyrians, Isa. xxxvii. 36. Does our Saviour visit his church with afflictive dispensations because of sin, and *kill her children with death?* Rev. ii. 22, 23. The same Angel appeared *with a drawn sword in his hand*, and smote the Israelites, so that David was *afraid because of the sword of the Angel of the Lord*, 1 Chro. xxi. 14.—16. 30. Both Jesus and this Angel claim that divine character, I AM. Jesus being represented as *speaking from heaven*, Heb. xii. 25. he appears in the same light with this Angel who *called to Hagar, and to Abraham, out of heaven*, Gen. xxi. 17. xxii. 11. 15. Is it Jesus whom we must now *hear?* The Israelites were under the same obligation with respect to this Angel, Ex. xxiii. 21. Is there no escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven? Heb. xii. 25. Concerning this Angel it was declared, *He will*  
*not*



*not pardon your transgressions.* If, therefore, Jesus be not essentially the same as this Angel, the unity of the church is lost. The patriarchs and their posterity had one Saviour; and Christians have another. We are not blessed with faithful Abraham, nor are we under the same covenant. But as the scripture assures us that the whole administration of the ancient church was committed to this Angel, we have, as has formerly been seen, the same incontestable evidence of the identity of this Angel and the Messiah \*.

Our author observes that “it even appears to have been  
“the great object of the Jewish religion, as contained in  
“the books of Moses, to preserve in the world the worship  
“of the one true God, notwithstanding the universal tendency to polytheism among all nations in the early ages †.” Therefore, it may naturally be imagined that God, in his infinite wisdom, would use the most proper means for attaining this end; particularly, that if he made himself known under certain designations, he would either confine all these entirely to himself, or if not all, yet some of them, especially such as might be expressive of his essence; and that, if he ever used any of the rest in speaking of creatures, he would use them evidently in an inferior sense. That he has acted in this very manner, is evident from the revelation which he gave to his peculiar people. Here we find him not only applying to himself, with a striking peculiarity, some of those designations which are occasionally given to creatures; but appropriating others, as absolutely incommunicable to them in any sense whatsoever.

All idolatry consists in giving that glory to the creature which belongs to the Creator. One great source of this, especially to the more ignorant part of mankind, has been the mistaking of the creature for the Creator. It must, therefore, be supposed that, if God hath ever employed  
mere

\* See p. 273, 274.

† Ear. Opin. vol. iii. p. 2.

mere creatures as instruments in delivering his will to their fellow-creatures, he hath, in the prosecution of his great end, used the most effectual means to prevent the objects of the Revelation from apprehending that they immediately heard the voice of God. We can suppose no mean so obvious, nor one that would so directly tend to prevent this mistake, as that of prohibiting those whom he employed from personating their great employer, using any of his names as if they might occasionally be given to them, or expressing themselves in such terms as might lead the hearers to imagine that God himself was the immediate Speaker. If, on the contrary, this necessary precaution hath been neglected; if God hath permitted a creature to say to his fellow, I am JEHOVAH, I AM THAT I AM; if he hath also directed those who were under the Spirit of inspiration, to record these Revelations in this very manner; so far hath he been from using those means that were most consistent with infinite wisdom, for the prevention of idolatry, that we cannot conceive that he could have taken more direct or effectual methods for establishing it, although this had been his avowed design in the whole of that Revelation contained in the Old Testament. Could I believe all that is supposed, and all this must be believed by every one who denies the Supreme Deity of the Son, the God of Abraham should never be my God.

#### C H A P. X.

*Of the Caution which some Fathers are said to ascribe to the Apostles, in divulging the Doctrine of the Divinity of Christ; and of the absolute silence ascribed to them, on this subject, by Dr Priestley.*

OUR author, in his first work on this subject, endeavoured to prove, that the primitive church was  
known



known to be *properly* Unitarian, from the conduct of Athanasius in ascribing to the Apostles “great caution in divulging the doctrine of the proper divinity of Christ\*.” It was replied by Dr Horsley, that Athanasius, in the passage referred to, speaks of unbelieving Jews only, and commends the wisdom of the apostles in chusing the most proper method of instruction †. A great deal has been advanced on both sides, in the progress of this controversy: and it must appear, to any impartial reader, that Dr Horsley has established his point. But as our author has that peculiar happiness of not being easily put out of conceit with any thing he has once advanced, this is again brought forward in due form, in his large work.

I do not mean properly to enter into the question with respect to the disputed passage, as it has been so fully agitated already; and would have said nothing on the subject, had it not seemed a piece of justice to Athanasius, and to the truth, to produce a few extracts from his writings, which plainly shew that he had a very different opinion of the conduct of the apostles from that ascribed to him, and which, as far as I can recollect, have not been introduced in the course of the dispute. This may be the more proper, as, according to Dr P. “the testimony of Athanasius, “on account of his known orthodoxy, and of course, his “unwillingness to make any needless concessions to his adversaries, may be thought to have more weight than any “other ‡”.

For the sake of those who have not seen what has been already published on this subject, it may be previously necessary to quote the passage which has occasioned so much litigation. I shall give it according to our author’s version: “Will they affirm, that the apostles held the doctrine of  
“Arius,

\* Hist. of Cor. vol. i. p. 12.

† Charge, &c. p. 20.—25.

‡ Vol. iii. p. 86.

“ Arius, because they say that Christ was a man of Naza-  
 “ reth, and suffered on the cross? or because they used these  
 “ words, were the apostles of opinion that Christ was only  
 “ a man, and nothing else? By no means: this is not to be  
 “ imagined. But this they did as wise master-builders,  
 “ and stewards of the mysteries of God; and they had this  
 “ good reason for it. For the Jews of that age, being de-  
 “ ceived themselves, and having deceived the Gentiles,  
 “ thought that Christ was a mere man, only that he came  
 “ of the seed of David, resembling other descendants of  
 “ David, and did not believe either that he was God, or  
 “ that the Word was made flesh. On this account, the  
 “ blessed apostles, with great prudence, in the first place,  
 “ taught what related to the humanity of our Saviour to  
 “ the Jews, that having fully persuaded them, from his mi-  
 “ raculous works, that Christ was come, they might after-  
 “ wards bring them to the belief of his divinity, shewing  
 “ that his works were not those of a man, but of God.  
 “ For example, Peter having said that Christ was a man  
 “ who had suffered, immediately added, *He is the Prince of*  
 “ *life*. In the Gospel, he confesses, *Thou art the Christ,*  
 “ *the Son of the living God*; and in his Epistle, he calls  
 “ him *the Bishop of souls* \*.”

Dr

\* Ουδεν γαρ αυτοις ατολμητον· οτι και αυτοι οι αποστολοι τα Αρειν  
 εφρονεν· ανθρωπον γαρ αυτον απο Ναζαρετ, και παθον τον Χριστον  
 απαγγελουσιν, εκεινων τοινυν τοιαυτα φανταζομενων, αρ' επειδη τοις  
 ρημασι τειτοις εχρησαντο, μονον ανθρωπον ηδειςαν τον Χριστον οι απο-  
 στολοι, και πλεον εδεν; μη γεινοιτο· εχ εστιν εδε εις ιην ποτε τετο λα-  
 βειν· αλλα και τετο ως αρχιτεκτονες σωφοι, και οικονομοι μυστηριων  
 Θεω πεποιηκασι, και την αιτιαν εχουσιν ευλογον· επειδη γαρ οι τοτε  
 Ιουδαιοι πλανηθεντες, και πλανησαντες Ελληνας, ενομιζον τον Χριστον  
 ψιλον ανθρωπον, μονον εκ σπερματι· Δαβιδ· αχρεσθαι, καθ' ομοιοτη-  
 τα των εκ τε Δαβιδ· αλλων γενωμενων τεκνων· ετε δε Θεον αυτον, εδε



Dr P. endeavours to shew that Athanasius not only meant “the believing Jews, but them *principally* \* ; that he did “not think that the apostles had preached the doctrine of “the divinity of Christ with much effect † ; that he must “be understood to say, that the Jewish converts, while “(through the caution of the apostles) they were ignorant “of the divinity of Christ, preached the Gospel in that “state to the Gentiles ‡ ;” and ‘ that Athanasius must have “supposed that both the Jewish and Gentile churches were “Unitarian in the time of the apostles ||.” His mode of probation is very singular. He objects to the proofs which Athanasius gives of the Apostles having preached the divinity of Christ, as not sufficiently *distinct* §. Then, for the support of his objection, he makes a leap from the *opinion* of Athanasius to the *intention* of the apostle Peter; asserting, that “in this speech he could not *mean* to allude to” the divinity of our Saviour ¶. The plain meaning of this is; *Athanasius* could not believe that the Apostles preached this doctrine in a clear or distinct manner, because “the instances he produces” are not so *distinct* as to prove it to the conviction of *Dr Priestley*.

Athanasius, in illustrating the harmony of the Apostles in the declaration of this doctrine, mentions an expression used by

ὅτι λογῶσα ῥῆε ἐγένετο ἐπιστεῦον. ταῦτα ἐνεκκ, μετὰ πολλῆς τῆς συ-  
νεσεως οἱ μακαριοὶ ἀποστολοὶ τὰ ἀνθρώπινα τε σωτηρῶ ἐξηγῶντο πρῶ-  
τον τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις, ἵνα ὁλῶς πείσαντες αὐτοὺς, ἐκ τῶν φαινόμενων καὶ  
γενομένων σημείων, ἐληλυθέναι τὸν Χριστὸν, λοιπὸν καὶ εἰς τὰ περὶ τῆς  
θεότητος αὐτοῦ πείσιν αὐτοὺς ἀναγαγῶσιν, δεικνύντες ὅτι τὰ γενομένα  
ἔργα οὐκ εἰν ἀνθρώπου, ἀλλὰ Θεοῦ. ἀμελεῖ Πέτρος ὁ λεγὼν ἀνδρῶ πα-  
θητὸν τὸν Χριστὸν, εὐθὺς συνηπτει, Οὐκ ἀρχηγὸς τῆς ζωῆς εἰν, &c.  
De Sententia Dionysii, Op. vol. i. p. 553, 554.

\* Ear. Opin. vol. iii. p 90.

† Ibid. p. 95.

‡ Ibid. p. 97.

|| Ibid. 96.

§ Ibid. p. 93.

¶ Ibid. p. 94.

by Paul in his discourse at Athens. Therefore, our author wishes it to appear that, according to the ancient writers, the *apostolical reserve* on this head continued till about the year 53. I am astonished that Dr P. can venture such an insinuation. For nothing can be more evident than that Athanasius represents the apostle Peter as proceeding to the doctrine of the divinity, as soon as he had fully proved that Jesus was the Christ, nay, as proving it by the same arguments. For, according to the venerable Father, the apostle having shewn that Christ was come, by his miracles, he λοιπον και in *the rest* of his discourse proved “that the works “done were not those of a man, but of God.” Why does Athanasius subjoin, “for example, Peter having said that “Christ was a man who had suffered, *immediately* added, “*He is the Prince of Life,*” unless he means this as an *example* of Peter’s preaching the divinity of Christ as well as his humanity, preaching it in the very same discourse, preaching the humanity in such a manner as *immediately* to guard the honour of the divinity?

I might quote many passages from the writings of Athanasius, in which his sentiments, with respect to the conduct of the apostles and the faith of the whole church, appear directly opposite to those imputed to him by Dr P. But two or three may suffice. Illustrating the doctrine of the Trinity, he says; “We see that this was the tradition, and the “doctrine, and the faith of the church universal from the “beginning, which our Lord himself delivered, which the “apostles preached, and which the fathers preserved. For “in this is the church *founded*, and he who falls from it, “neither can be a Christian, nor deserves the name of a “Christian.—That this is the very faith of the church, “they (the enemies of the Trinity) may learn from the “commission which our Lord gave to his apostles, when “sending them forth. He commanded them to lay this  
I
“ foundation



“ foundation in the church, saying ; Go, ye, and teach all  
 “ nations, baptizing them into the Name of the Father, of  
 “ the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. But the apostles, going  
 “ forth, taught in this very manner : and this is the doc-  
 “ trine which is preached throughout the whole church un-  
 “ der heaven. The church, therefore, having this foun-  
 “ dation of the faith, let them tell us, if it be a Trinity \*.”  
 Describing the errors of Marcellus and Paulus Samosatenus,  
 he says ; “ Had they been actuated by any regard to the  
 “ future, had they believed the coming and the judgment  
 “ of God, or had they been afraid of punishment, they  
 “ would have acceded to the faith, believed the Gospels,  
 “ and listened to the apostles, rather than to human rea-  
 “ sonings. For the apostles, going forth, straightway with  
 “ the most perfect harmony preached that Christ was the  
 “ Son of God, that he was born in Bethlehem of the seed  
 “ of David according to the flesh, that he was made like  
 “ unto men, and crucified for men under Pontius Pilate.  
 “ They declared that the same Person was God and man,  
 “ the Son of God and the Son of man from heaven and  
 “ from earth, impassible and passible, and that he was no  
 “ other

\* Ἰδωμεν δὲ ὁμῶς καὶ πρὸς τοὺς, καὶ αὐτὴν τὴν ἐξ ἀρχῆς παρα-  
 δοσιν, καὶ διδασκαλίαν, καὶ πίσιν τῆς καθολικῆς ἐκκλησίας, ἣν ὁ μὲν  
 Κυρίως ἔδωκεν, οἱ δὲ Ἀποστολοὶ ἐκηρύξαν, καὶ οἱ πατέρες ἐφυλάξαν· ἐν  
 ταύτῃ γὰρ ἡ ἐκκλησία τεθμελιώται· καὶ ὁ ταύτης ἐκπιπτὼν, ὅτ’ ἀρ-  
 εῖη, ὅτ’ ἀν’ ἀν’ λέγοι το Χριστιανόν· — καὶ ὅτι αὕτη ἡ πίσις ἡ τῆς ἐκ-  
 κλησίας ἐστὶ, μαθητῶσαν, πῶς ὁ μὲν Κυρίως, ἀποστελλῶν τῆς Ἀποστο-  
 λῆς, παρηγγέλλει τὸν θεμελίον τίθεναι τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ λέγων, Πορεύει-  
 τε, μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη· βαπτίζοντες αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ  
 Πατρὸς, καὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ, καὶ τοῦ Ἁγίου Πνεύματος· οἱ δὲ Ἀποστολοὶ πο-  
 ρεύθεντες, ὅτως ἐδίδαξαν. Καὶ τὸτο ἐστὶν εἰς πάσαν τὴν ὑπ’ οὐρανὸν ἐκ-  
 κλησίαν τὸ κηρύγμα· ἔκκειν τὸτο ἐχέσθης τῆς ἐκκλησίας τὸ θεμελίον τῆς  
 πίστεως, &c. Ad Serapion, vol. i. p. 202, 203.

“ other, not two persons, not two *hypostases*, not two objects of adoration \*.”

Not only does Athanasius give this account of the preaching of the apostles in general, but he elsewhere explains that very discourse of Peter, to which the passage quoted by Dr P. refers. On this occasion, however, the worthy Father has not Dionysius to vindicate from the charge of heresy in what he had advanced in opposition to the Sabelians, (whom Athanasius often represents as the Jews of that age,) and therefore, he does not find it necessary to borrow an argument from the *prudence* of the apostles in their manner of addressing the literal Jews, the predecessors of these heretics in unbelief. We may therefore conclude, that he is capable of judging more coolly concerning the conduct of the apostles. He is so very particular, that having quoted these words, *He hath made him both Lord and Christ*, Acts ii. 36 †; he gives a long paraphrase of them, in connexion with the rest of Peter’s discourse. “ Peter,” he says, “ having learned these things from Christ (concerning his divinity and humanity) in both respects corrects the Jews,” saying; ‘ O ye Jews, the holy scriptures declare

\* Εἰ γὰρ προσεδόκων το μέλλον, εἰ Θεὸς ἐπιδημίαν καὶ κρίσιν ἐπιστευόν, εἰ κολάσιν ἐφοβήντο, τῇ πίστει προσήρχοντο, εὐαγγελίοις ἐπείθοντο καὶ Ἀποστόλοις ἠκολούθουν μᾶλλον ἢ λογισμοῖς ἀνθρώποις. Χριστὸν γὰρ εὐθὺς ἐκηρύξαν ἐξελθόντες οἱ Ἀπόστολοι συμφωνῶς καὶ ἀκολουθῶς τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ, τῆτον ἐν Βηθλεὲμ γεννηθέντα ἐκ σπέρματος Δαβὶδ κατὰ σὰρκα, τὸν ὁμοιωθέντα ἀνθρώποις, καὶ σταυρωθέντα ὑπὲρ ἀνθρώπων ἐπὶ Ποντίῳ Πιλάτῳ, αὐτὸν εἶπον Θεόν, αὐτὸν ἀνθρώπον, αὐτὸν εἶπον υἱὸν Θεοῦ, αὐτὸν υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου, αὐτὸν ἐξ ἑρᾶν, αὐτὸν ἀπογῆς, αὐτὸν ἀπαθῆ, αὐτὸν παθῆτον, καὶ ἄλλον, καὶ προσῶπα δύο, καὶ ὑποστάσεις, καὶ προσκυνήσεις δύο. Unum esse Christum, Opera, vol. i. p. 666.

† Cont. Arianos Orat. iii. Op. vol. i. p. 382.



‘ declare that Christ shall come ; and you account him a  
 ‘ mere man, as one of the descendants of David. But the  
 ‘ scriptures do not point him out in this light, but rather  
 ‘ declare him to be Lord and God, and immortal, and  
 ‘ the Prince of life.’ Then he makes Peter introduce these  
 words, *The Lord said unto my Lord, &c.* and the language  
 of David concerning the resurrection of Christ, and after-  
 wards proceed in this manner ; ‘ If you therefore can prove  
 ‘ that a person of this description has already come, and  
 ‘ can demonstrate that he is God, then with propriety may  
 ‘ you oppose us.—Moreover, the signs which he exhibited,  
 ‘ prove that he was God incarnate, that he was life itself,  
 ‘ and the Lord of death.—After we were unwilling to  
 ‘ know God by his Word, and to serve our natural Lord  
 ‘ the Word of God, it pleased God to shew his own divine  
 ‘ power in man, and to draw all men to himself. But to  
 ‘ have done this by mere man would have been unbeco-  
 ‘ ming ; lest we having a man for our Lord, should have be-  
 ‘ come worshippers of man. Therefore, on this account the  
 ‘ Word himself was made flesh, and the Father hath called  
 ‘ him Jesus, and thus *made him Lord and Christ* ; that, as  
 ‘ in the Name of Jesus every knee boweth, so we should  
 ‘ know him as King, and Lord, and at the same time the  
 ‘ Son, and through him know the Father.’ “ Therefore,  
 “ the greatest part of the Jews who heard these things were  
 “ convinced, and afterwards acknowledged the Christ \*.”

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\* Ο τοίνυν Πέτρος μαθὼν ταῦτα παρὰ τοῦ σωτῆρος, κατ’ ἀμφοτε-  
 ρὰ διορθοῦμεν τὰς Ἰουδαίας, φησὶν· ὦ Ἰουδαῖοι, Χριστὸν ἐρχεσθαι, κα-  
 ταγγελλοῦσιν αἱ θείαι γραφαί, καὶ ὑμεῖς μὲν ψιλὸν ἀνθρώπον αὐτόν,  
 ὡς ἐνὰ τῶν ἐκ τοῦ Δαβὶδ νομίζετε, τὰ δὲ γεγραμμένα περὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ τοῦ  
 αὐτοῦ, οἷον ὑμεῖς λέγετε, σημαίνουσιν· ἄλλο μαλλὸν Κύριον καὶ  
 Θεόν, καὶ ἀθάνατον, καὶ χορηγὸν ζωῆς καταγγελλοῦσιν.—εἰ μὲν οὖν  
 δυνασθε εἰπεῖν, ὡς ἐλθόντος πρότερον τούτου, καὶ δυνασθε δεῖξαι, Θεοῦ

αὐτοῦ

A little after he says concerning the language of Peter ;  
 “ When he spoke these things, he was by no means silent  
 “ with respect to the eternal and paternal deity of the  
 “ Son ; as he had already observed, that he had *shed forth*  
 “ *the Spirit* on us. But to bestow the Spirit in a sovereign  
 “ manner, is not the work of a creature, but the preroga-  
 “ tive of God \*.” In another place, he observes even  
 concerning

αὐτον εἶναι, ἀφ’ ὧν ἐποίησε σημεῖων καὶ τερατῶν, εἰκοτῶς ἡμῖν διαμα-  
 χεσθε.——καὶ πάλιν, ἀφείλεν ὁ Θεός, τὸ δὲ καὶ τοιαῦτα σημεῖα ποι-  
 ῆσαι αὐτον, οἷα γέγονε, δεικνύσι, Θεὸν εἶναι τὸν ἐν σωματίῳ καὶ αὐτον  
 εἶναι τὴν ζῶην, καὶ Κυρίον τὰ θάνατα.——ἐπειδὴ ἔκ ηθελήσαμεν δια-  
 τὰ λόγῳ αὐτῶ ἐπιγινῶναι τὸν Θεόν, καὶ δαλεῦσαι τῷ φύσει δεσποτῇ ἡ-  
 μῶν τῷ λόγῳ τὰ Θεῶ, ἠυδοκῆσεν ὁ Θεός, ἐν ἀνθρώπῳ δεῖξαι τὴν ἐαυτοῦ  
 κυριότητα καὶ πάντα ἐλκύσαι πρὸς ἐαυτόν· δι’ ἀνθρώπου δὲ ψιλῶ τὰ-  
 το ποιῆσαι ἀπρεπές ἦν· ἵνα μὴ ἀνθρώπον Κυρίον ἔχοντες, ἀνθρώπο λα-  
 τραι γενομεθα· διὰ τῆτο ὁ λόγος σαρεξ ἐγένετο· καὶ ἐκάλεσε τὸ ὄνομα  
 αὐτῶ Ἰησοῦν, καὶ οὕτως ἐποίησεν αὐτον Κυρίον καὶ Χριστόν ὁ Πατήρ·—  
 ἵν’ ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ, ὃν ὑμεῖς ἐσαυρώσατε, ὡς περ πάν γόνυ καμ-  
 πτε, οὕτως καὶ Κυρίον καὶ βασιλέα αὐτον τὸν υἱὸν ἐπιγινώσκωμεν,  
 καὶ δι’ αὐτῶ τὸν πατέρα. Ἰουδαίων μὲν οὖν οἱ πλείστοι ταῦτα ἀκη-  
 οντες, ἐνετραπήσαν καὶ λοιπὸν ἐπεγνώσαν τὸν Χριστόν. Ibid. p. 386,  
 387.—With the same propriety may we infer from this pas-  
 sage, that, according to Athanasius, these Jews did not *ac-*  
*knowledge* the Christ for a considerable time *after* they were  
*converted*, as it is inferred from the other, that, in the opi-  
 nion of this Father, the Apostles did not divulge the doctrine  
 of the divinity of Jesus for a considerable time after explain-  
 ing the doctrine of the Messiah. If, in the one case, he  
 means that they confessed Christ immediately upon their  
 conversion, the same intimate connexion must be meant in  
 the other. For λοιπὸν is the term used in both places. If  
 there be any difference, it is in favour of the other place.  
 For there Athanasius also introduces εὐθύς.

\* Καὶ γὰρ ταῦτα λέγων, ἔκ ἐσιοπήσεν περὶ τῆς αἰδὸς καὶ πατρι-  
 κῆς θεότητος τὰ υἱῶ· ἀλλὰ καὶ προσηργικῶς ἦν· ὅτι τὸ πνεῦμα ἐξεχέεν  
 ἐφ’



concerning these words, *Jesus, a man declared by God in the midst of you*, ver. 22. “What is said by the blessed Peter  
“proclaims the right and sincere doctrine of the Deity of  
“the only-begotten, not separating the person of God the  
“Word from the man born of the Virgin †.”

From these passages let the reader judge, if Dr P. can reasonably persist in asserting that in the opinion of Athanasius, neither the apostles preached, nor the primitive Christians believed the divinity of our Saviour.

The Doctor, with the same design, adds a variety of passages from the writings of Chrysostom and other fathers who lived in later ages. But it would serve no good purpose to follow him through this labyrinth. Although it were unquestionably true, that all the fathers, whom he has quoted, were persuaded that the apostles were cautious in divulging the doctrine of the divinity of Christ, because of the prejudices of *believing* Jews, would we thence be under a necessity of concluding that the primitive church was ignorant of the Deity of Christ, or that the apostles never preached this doctrine? The consequence would, indeed, be necessary, were the opinions of the fathers the rule of our faith. But, blessed be God, we have the scriptures of truth: and we are as much bound to search them for ourselves, as they were. If we find this precious doctrine in the oracles of God; it does not concern us, what was the opinion of pious, but fallible men. As far as circumstances correspond, the divine Spirit speaks as directly

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to

εφ' ημας· το δε μετ' εξουσιας διδοναι το πνευμα, & κτισματα, οιδε ποιηματος ειν' αλλα Θεω δωρον. Ibid. p. 388.

† Το τοιουν λεγομενον υπο τω μακαριω Πετρω, ορθην και ειλικρινη την θεοτητα μονογενοϋς κηρυσσει & την υποστασιν χωριζων τω Θεω λογω απο τω εκ Μαρίας ανδρωπε. Contra Arianos Oratio V. Op. vol. i. p. 546.

to us, as he did to those to whom the scriptures were immediately addressed.

Dr P. does not, however, entirely rest his proof, with respect to the conduct of the apostles, on the opinion of the fathers. He asserts that, “if we look into the book of Acts, we shall find that these *sublime doctrines* (of the *pre-existence and divinity* of Christ) were not taught in an early period.—All the preaching of Christ,” he says, “of which we have an account in the book of Acts, is that Jesus was the Messiah, whose divine mission was confirmed by miracles, especially that of his own resurrection, and by the gift of the Spirit\*.” But it is evident that almost all the discourses, recorded in the Acts, were addressed to Jews who did not believe; and many of them were the first addresses made to such. This, then, is the force of Dr P.’s argument: “The apostles, in their first discourses to those Jews who rejected Christ as a deceiver, did not clearly declare his Deity to them: therefore, they never gave any instructions, on this subject, to those who did believe.” He, who can see the force of this sort of reasoning, will swallow any thing.

Even supposing the truth of our author’s assertion, it would not be more difficult for us to assign a reason for the conduct of the apostles, than for him (on his own principle, that Jesus claimed no higher character than that of a human Messiah), to shew, in a satisfactory manner, why he so frequently charged his disciples to *tell no man* who he was.

Though it were granted that, in the whole book of Acts, there was not one direct declaration of the Deity of Christ; yet on the ground of that fact already mentioned, that almost all the discourses, which are there recorded, were addressed to unbelievers, it might be shewn that it could not thence be justly inferred, that the apostles never preached this doctrine, or that the first Christians did not believe it.



I shall not argue from the example of the great Prophet himself, who said even to those disciples, who had attended him during the whole of his personal ministry, *I have many things to tell you, but ye cannot now bear them*; nor from that prudence enjoined on them, when he said, *Be ye wise as serpents*; nor from the conduct of one apostle, who wisely availed himself of the disputes between the Pharisees and Sadducees. The argument founded on the prudence of the apostles, may have been carried too far on the one hand; and it has certainly been unjustly interpreted on the other.

While we maintain that the disciples of Jesus believed and taught his Deity, their conduct in especially insisting, in the discourses referred to, on his mediatory character, may be sufficiently vindicated, from a variety of considerations.

How ardently soever they wished to convince the unbelieving Jews of his divinity, they could not have chosen a more proper method than that which they adopted. The eye of the mind bears a striking resemblance to that of the body. Did natural light, in all its splendor, at once burst upon the bodily eye, it would produce a temporary suspension of its powers. Were this continued, it would soon destroy the visual faculty. But the God of nature hath wisely ordained the gradual diffusion of light. The same order is preserved with respect to the mind. In every science there are first principles, the knowledge of which is primarily necessary. If these be disregarded, the mind, instead of receiving instruction, is stupified. Before the coming of Christ, God dealt with his church as in an infantile state, imparting knowledge only by degrees, and extending his instructions, just as she was able to receive them. Under the New Testament, he hath provided *milk for babes*, as well as *strong meat* for them whose *senses* are exercised. The Spirit teaches us that the first principles must be known,

before there can be any progress towards perfection. Our Lord told his hearers of *earthly things*, before he would tell them of those that were heavenly, (John iii. 12). Therefore, it was most natural and proper for his apostles, primarily to inform their hearers of those *earthly things* which pertained to their Lord, as respecting his human nature. This was, indeed, the *foot* of that *ladder* by which they were to ascend.

No reasoning can be more conclusive, or more convincing, than that which proceeds on the concessions or previous convictions of those with whom we argue. This method the apostles observed. There is a saying of Peter, the found of which is so pleasing to our author, that he loses no opportunity of introducing it. He gives it a place almost in every work on this subject, large or small. “The apostles,” he says, “and all who conversed with our Lord, before and after his resurrection, considered him in no other light than simply as *a man approved of God, by signs and wonders which God did by him, Acts ii. 22 \**.” But it is evident that Dr P., either wilfully or ignorantly, has never attended to the proper design and real force of this language. The apostle Peter does not, in these words, give a summary of *the common faith*. But he particularly mentions the humanity of Christ, because he was about to speak of his sufferings, death and resurrection, and wished to convince his hearers of their guilt in crucifying him, even from what themselves believed. Had he said; “Jesus, the eternal Son of God, equal with the Father,—him being delivered,—ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain, and he hath risen from the dead,” they would perhaps have considered his language as a proof of their former charge, that these men were *full of new wine*, ver. 13. The apparent contradictions would most probably have prevented their giving him a further hearing. But

\* Hist. of Corrupt vol. i. p. 2. Ear. Op. vol. i. p. 11. vol. iii. p. 210.

434. Appeal, p. 16. General View, p. 13. &c. &c.



But he proceeds with them on grounds which they could not deny. While they believed that Jesus was a man, they could not refuse that he had the most extraordinary attestations. Therefore he says ; “ Ye men of Israel, hear “ these words ; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God “ *among you*, by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which “ God did by him in the midst of you, *as ye yourselves also* “ *know* ; him being delivered,—ye have taken, and by “ wicked hands have crucified and slain ; whom God hath “ raised up.” It is remarkable that, in all the places where we have met with this passage, as quoted by our author, he does not once give the twenty second verse fully. He generally throws out these words, which mark the true design of the apostle, as containing his appeal to the knowledge of the Jews themselves. He calls Jesus *a man*, just as he calls him *Jesus of Nazareth* ; in both cases, accommodating his language to their apprehensions. From the mode of expression, there is no more reason to infer that he accounted Jesus a mere man, than that he considered Nazareth as the place of his nativity, because he uses that phraseology which was common with the Jews, on this false supposition.

He says that Jesus was *approved of God*. But this phrase does not convey the full or proper meaning of ἀποδείκνυμενον. It is, *pointed out* in the plainest manner, *set forth* or *demonstrated by God to, or among you*, (1 Cor. iv. 9.). Had the apostle meant, as he is understood by Socinians, to assure his hearers that Jesus was a mere man, he would have expressed himself very differently. He does not, in this place, particularly specify what Jesus was *demonstrated* to be. He either leaves a blank, which he was afterwards to fill up in the progress of his discourse ; or insinuates that the wonderful works, performed by him, most clearly proved his title to all that honour which they knew he

had

had claimed, and for claiming which, they had condemned him, that of being the proper Son of God.

The inspired historian Moses calls those *three men*, Gen. xvij. 2. to none of whom this character really belonged. For two of them were angels, and the other was JEHOVAH. Why, then, does he call them men? Because they appeared as such; and because Abraham, at first, considered them in no other light. In the same sense, he who wrestled with Jacob is called *a man*, Gen. xxxii. 24. although he had power to bless him, ver. 26. 29. and was truly God. If these might be called *men*, who had nothing more than the *appearance* of human nature; much more he, of whom it is granted that he was truly man. If JEHOVAH himself might receive this designation, because he assumed merely the likeness of our nature; it can be no argument against his being God, of whom it is believed that he assumed this nature in reality. Indeed, both Moses and Peter speak of the same glorious Person.

The apostle's address is a striking example of the argument *ad hominem*. It is as if he had said, "To consider  
 " Jesus merely as he appeared to you in human nature, you  
 " cannot deny that he was a great and extraordinary per-  
 " son, and that he had the highest attestation possible.  
 " Therefore, when you crucified him, it must have been  
 " *with wicked hands.*" His saying that *God did* these things *by him*, is no proof that he considered Jesus as a mere man. For though the works which our Saviour performed, in all their circumstances, were a full demonstration of his Deity; yet the particular relation in which he performed them, was that of a servant. Dr P. can derive no advantage from this language, unless he beg the question. For the warmest friend of the Deity of Christ assents to the words in their proper meaning, as truly as he. There was the greatest propriety in saying, that *God did* these things *by him*,  
 because



because the Jews had impiously ascribed his most illustrious works to Belzebub.

But it cannot be proved that the assertion, that *God did* these things *by him*, as *man*, excludes his divinity. For *all the fulness of the godhead dwells in him bodily*. The human nature of Christ was the medium of the manifestation of divine power. It is universally allowed by the orthodox, that our Saviour, even in his exalted state, *received and receives gifts in the man*, Psal. lxxviii. 18. *God also raised him up*. But can our author prove that this general designation of the Deity excludes *God the Son*? Did he not declare that he had *power to lay down his life, and to take it again*?

Little as Athanasius, according to our author's testimony, could find in favour of the divinity of Christ in the apostle's discourse, he found something even here. For, explaining this verse, he says; "From these signs and miracles which the Lord did, he was demonstrated to be, not a mere man, but God incarnate \*." I am not sure, but the language might be properly rendered, *which God in the midst of you did by him*; as expressive of that antitypical dwelling as in a tabernacle, of that real incarnation of a divine Person, so long and so frequently promised to the church, in terms precisely of the same import. It deserves our notice, that the promise in Joel, which the apostle illustrates as the subject of his discourse, is immediately preceded by another, expressive of God's dwelling *in the midst* of his church, chap. ii. 27 †.

Those conclusions, to which the mind is necessarily led, as the result of its own principles, or of its previous convictions and operations, have peculiar energy. Here were  
many

\* Απο γαρ των σημειων και αν εποiei θαυμασιων ο Κυριος, απεδειχθη υχ' απλως ανθρωπος, αλλα Θεος ων εν σωματι. Contra Arianos Orat. iii. Opera, vol. i. p. 383.

† See also chap. iii. 17.

many witnesses, solemnly testifying that *God* had *raised up* that very Person whom the Jews had crucified. The Holy Spirit evidently attested these witnesses by the miraculous gift of tongues. Therefore, as soon as their hearers were convinced of the truth of their testimony, they would conclude within themselves, that Jesus had suffered unjustly. They would instantly recollect the ground of his condemnation by their Sanhedrim. This, they knew, was his own testimony, that he was *the Son of God*. Finding that his character was vindicated, in so extraordinary a manner, they must immediately have inferred the truth of that testimony, and concluded that he was the Son of God, in that very sense according to which he was supposed to be chargeable with blasphemy, *as making himself equal with God*, and asserting his title to sit at the right hand of power.

In that age, God condescended to call the attention of carnal men, by evidence addressed to their senses; confirming divine truths by miracles, which were *a sign to them who believed not*, 1 Cor. xiv. 22. It was, therefore, most natural for his ambassadors, *first* to appeal to these facts which had been subjected to the senses of men; and to deduce from them all those inferences that were native, as clearing the way for the reception of doctrines truly more *sublime*.

Some of these discourses recorded in the Acts were delivered in such circumstances, that the disciples could not avoid this method, or at least, could not observe any other so proper. When *cloven tongues, like as of fire, sat on each of them*, and *every man heard them speak in his own language*; they were under a necessity of accounting for these astonishing circumstances, in reply to the inquiries of some, and to the ridicule of others, Acts ii. 12, 13. They could not answer that question, *What meaneth this?* without declaring that it was the work of Jesus. They could not

ersuade



persuade their countrymen, that it was his work, without proclaiming his resurrection and glory. They could not proclaim these, without referring to his death, and criminalizing those who had crucified him. They could not convince them of their guilt in crucifying him, so directly, as by proving that he was the true Messiah. For it was only a part of their guilt, that they had rejected the Son of God. This formally consisted in their rejecting him in the most endearing character which he could sustain, that of the promised Deliverer. As all their national hopes, desires and longings centered here, the apostles could not touch any other string that possessed such universal influence. Indeed, they could not shew that the effusion of the Spirit was the work of Jesus, without immediately describing him as Messiah. For all the promises of the gift of the Spirit referred to the time of his appearance : and it was not immediately as the Son of God, but as Mediator, that he had *shed forth that which they heard and saw*. It was as being himself the *Christ, the Anointed*, that he communicated this anointing to others. As King of Zion, on occasion of his triumphant entry into his palace, he distributed gifts to men, and proclaimed pardon *even to the rebellious*. From him as the head of the body, exalted in *human nature*, did these influences descend on the members. It would, therefore, have been highly improper to have passed over his mediatory character, the more immediate cause of all this, in order to prove his divine nature, which was the more remote ; especially as the remote cause could not be believed, without a previous conviction with respect to the immediate.

The same observation will apply to the address of the apostles to the council, when they were interrogated in regard to their healing the impotent man, Acts iv. 5.—12. The rulers said ; “ By what power, or by what name have

“ ye done this ?” The apostles replied ; “ If we this day  
 “ be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man,  
 “ by what means he is made whole ; Be it known unto  
 “ you all,—That by the name of Jesus Christ of Naza-  
 “ reth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the  
 “ dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you  
 “ whole.” They declare that the cure was effected in  
 consequence of the exaltation of Jesus as Mediator, of his  
 being *raised*, and *becoming the head of the corner*, ver. 12.  
 And this was, undoubtedly, the most proper course that  
 the apostles could take, in the first instance at least. For  
 their miraculous powers proceeding from him as Mediator,  
 every time that these were exercised, there was a renewed  
 vindication of his character, and a new evidence of the  
 great guilt of his persecutors.

It was as necessary to believe the real humanity of  
 Christ, as the truth of his divinity. For without the one,  
 men could receive no benefit from the other. The works  
 ascribed to him, as properly his own, are so great, that, to  
 reason, it seems fully as difficult to believe that he was  
 truly man, as that he was the Son of God. Had not the  
 apostles guarded against this extreme, the Jews who, from  
 their writings, were so well acquainted with the inter-  
 vention of angels, might have fallen into that error, which  
 so generally prevailed in succeeding ages, of supposing that  
 Christ had only the appearance of humanity, and that he  
 only seemed to suffer, to die, to rise again, and to ascend.  
 His own disciples, both before and after his death, when  
 they saw him suspend the ordinary laws of nature, were  
 under the temporary influence of this error. When they  
 beheld him *walking on the sea*, they were troubled, saying,  
*It is a Spirit*, Matth. xiv. 26. When, after his resurrection,  
 he *stood in the midst of them, the doors being shut*, they were  
*terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a*  
*Spirit,*



*Spirit*, Luke xxiv. 37. The Holy Ghost, who afterwards spoke by them, not only guarded their immediate hearers against this error; but, foreseeing its future prevalence, provided the church with a sufficient antidote.

It was necessary that the disciples should especially declare the divine mission of Jesus as the Messiah; because in this character he wrought salvation. It was only as *sent* by the Father, that he could be the Saviour, as his *servant* and *elect*, that he was to receive the Spirit and *bring forth judgment to the Gentiles*, Isa. xlii. 1. The knowledge of Jesus as the eternal Son of God, could, of itself, have been of no real advantage to sinful men. Therefore, before his coming, his divinity was still revealed in the most intimate connexion with his mediatory character. Did the Father testify to the Israelites, that his Name was *in him*? He, at the same time, revealed him as an *Angel* or *Messenger*, commanding them to *obey his voice*. When he was declared to be a begotten Son, and exhibited as the object of faith, he was also proclaimed King over Zion. That character, *the mighty God*, is given him in connexion with others expressive of his office. When his *goings forth* are said to have been *from of old, from everlasting*, he is at the same time described as *the Ruler of Israel*, who should *come forth* out of Bethlehem.

Thus, also, the apostles took the most proper plan for combating the prejudices of the Jews. We have heard a great deal concerning their firm persuasion that the Messiah was to be a mere man. It is granted on both sides, that the doctrine of the *resurrection* was denied by many of this people. Persons of this description could have no fear of God, and, of consequence, no respect to Jesus, although declared to be divine. But a conviction of the truth of this doctrine, as exemplified in him when once produced in their minds, would be a mean of awakening them to con-

cern

cern about their eternal interests. There was another prejudice, fully as powerful and prevalent among them, as any of the former. This was in favour of a salvation merely of a *temporal* nature. While this remained, the proclamation of a divine Saviour would be despised. But, as the resurrection of Jesus proved that he was the true Messiah; his previous sufferings, and his entrance into glory, would convince those who did not reject the former evidence, that he came to accomplish a spiritual salvation. By striking against the prejudices last mentioned, the apostles *laid the axe to the root of the tree*. Although it were certain, that the Jews of that age generally believed that the Messiah was to be no more than man; while we know the doctrine of scripture, and the faith of their progenitors, we must be persuaded that the great reason of their delusion in this respect, was their having lost all spiritual apprehensions of his work and kingdom.

The method, adopted by the apostles, seems to have been consonant to that of God himself, in making known to his people the character of Jesus. He first gave them the most abundant, and the most satisfactory evidence of *the dignity of the Person* whom he sent. This consisted in his own testimony from heaven, in the testimony of John the Baptist, in that of Jesus himself, and in that also of his works, to which he often appealed as undeniable proofs of his divinity. Thence the apostle John demonstrates that, although *his own received him not*, it was not for want of evidence. For he says; *We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father*. In the introduction to his first epistle, he also shews that *the Word of life* was most clearly *manifested*. But God had another, and a final, evidence in reserve for them. This, indeed, more immediately referred to the *mediatory character* of Jesus. It was ~~no~~ other than *the sign of the prophet Jonas*. Need we wonder,



wonder, then, that the apostles should especially insist on his resurrection? They could not prove, or even mention this, without asserting his humanity. They generally ascribe the work to God. But this was also proper. For it was a direct proof of the innocence of Jesus, tending to remove the prejudices of the Jews against him as an impostor, and a blasphemer. It was also a certain demonstration of the perfection of his mediatory work. While the apostles ascribed the resurrection to God, they denied it to Jesus *as man* only; but, as has been seen, did not exclude the second Person of the Trinity, any more than the first or third.

The mediatorial character of Jesus was that special point of testimony with which he entrusted his servants. If they clearly and fully declared this, the primary end of their mission, especially as respecting their countrymen, was fulfilled. It being once established that Jesus was that illustrious Person foretold, the Jews were referred to more ancient, and, to them, more incontestable proofs, as to his essential dignity. These were their own scriptures. To these our Lord himself had appealed, when proving his equality with the Father. He had accused his hearers of disbelieving the testimony of Moses, because they rejected his: *Had ye believed Moses, he says, ye would have believed me*, John. v. 46. The same method was observed by his servants. To mention one instance only; it is evidently the design of Stephen, to prove that the prophet foretold by Moses was that Angel who declared that he was the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, Acts vii. 30, 31, 32. 37, 38.

It was not the principal work of the apostles to proclaim the essential dignity of the promised Messiah. This had been done in the clearest manner, in the promises and

predictions respecting his appearance. Nor was it the immediate end of their mission, to unfold the nature of the mediatory office, the personal qualifications necessary for the discharge of it, the means by which the work of the Mediator was to be accomplished, or the evidences of its actual completion. All this was also done to their hands. The great design of the law, and of the writings of the prophets, being to testify of Christ in these respects; had the apostles directly entered on this work, their conduct would have contained a reflection on *the Spirit of prophecy*, as if it had not been *the testimony of Jesus*. They were especially to identify the Person of whom *Moses, in the law, and the prophets, did write*. For this is indispensably necessary in all evidence that has a personal respect. They were to shew that this very Jesus, whom the Jews had crucified, was he. For, after the coming of the Messiah, how just soever the abstract notions that men might entertain concerning his revealed character, if they denied that Jesus was the person, notwithstanding their having sufficient means of information, they exposed themselves to the danger of *dying in their sins*. The apostles were to identify the Person, by shewing that all those sensible evidences of the accomplishment of the work of mediation, which had been promised in the scriptures, were verified in Jesus; particularly in his wonderful works, his great humiliation, his sufferings to the death, his resurrection, ascension, and effusion of the Spirit.

That this was their more immediate work, is evident from what our Lord says to them with respect to the end of their mission: *I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: Other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours*, John iv. 38. He refers not only to his own and the Baptist's labours, but to those of all the prophets. He represents them as sowers, and the apostles as reapers:

*Herein*



*Herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth,* ver. 37. The prophets had the laborious work of *plowing up the fallow ground*; of sowing, among a carnal people, the precious doctrine concerning the Person and Office of the Saviour. The apostles are said, like reapers, to *enter into their labours*; because their principal work was to declare that Jesus was that Messiah so particularly designed by the prophets, to produce sufficient evidence of this, and thus to reap the fruits of their labours in the conversion of multitudes. The primitive church understood our Saviour's words in this very sense. Thus they are explained by Irenæus. "Who are these who *laboured*?—This is evidently to be understood of the patriarchs and prophets, who also prefigured our faith, and disseminated in the earth the doctrine of the coming of the Son of God, declaring *who* and *what manner of person* he should be; that their successors, who feared the Lord, might readily acknowledge the coming of Christ, being instructed by the prophets." This he illustrates, first by the conduct of Joseph, in retaining Mary, after being informed that she was with child of the Holy Ghost; then, by the sudden conversion of the Eunuch. "On this account," he says, Philip, when he found the Eunuch of the Queen of Ethiopia reading these things which are written; easily persuaded him to believe that the person spoken of was Christ, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, and suffered whatever the prophets foretold; and that he was that Son of God who gives eternal life to men. And as soon as he had baptized him, he departed from him: For nothing besides was wanting to him who was before instructed by the prophets. He was not ignorant of God the Father:—but only of the *advent* of the Son of God, which being soon made acquainted with, he went on his

“ way rejoicing, and became a preacher of the coming of  
 “ Christ in Ethiopia. On this account also, the apostles,  
 “ when gathering the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and  
 “ addressing them from the scriptures, shewed that Jesus,  
 “ who was crucified, was the Son of the living God, and  
 “ persuaded great multitudes \*.”

They were to prove the mediatory character of Jesus, especially from that *sensible* evidence with which they had been favoured, not for their own sakes only, but for the behoof of others. What they had *seen with their eyes, and looked upon, and heard, and handled of the living Word*, they were to *déclare* to others. Therefore, they are called *eye-witnesses of the Word*, Luke i. 2. When described in this character, the death and resurrection of Jesus, with remission of sins through his blood, are sometimes mentioned as the principal articles of their testimony, chap. xxiv. 46.—48. *Thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name.—And ye are his witnesses of these things* †. It is sometimes extended to all the circumstances of his life, as well as of his death, resurrection and glory, Acts x. 39. 42. On other occasions, the resurrection alone is mentioned, as if it had been the only article of their testimony; because it was the great evidence of the perfection of his character, including all the rest. Therefore, when the vacancy in the sacred college was to be supplied, the definition of an apostle is simply given in these words; *One must be ordained to be a witness with us of the resurrection*, Acts i. 22.

It may be said, that ‘ if Jesus was truly God, it would  
 “ have tended more directly to illustrate his dignity, had the  
 “ apostles

\* Iren. Lib. iv. c. 40.

† See also Acts v. 31, 32. xiii. 31.



“ apostles plainly declared that he rose from the dead by his own power.” But the doctrine of the resurrection, urged in this manner, would not have so properly confirmed that of remission of sins through his blood. The apostles were bound especially to declare, that he was *raised again for our justification*, that his resurrection was the great evidence of the perfection of his obedience and sufferings as our Surety, and of the acceptance of his work by God the Father, acting as Judge. When preaching the doctrine of salvation, it was necessary for them to adhere to the œconomy. For they could preach it on no other ground. And even in adhering to this, they had abundant opportunity of declaring the dignity of the Person.

But the apostles were not the only witnesses of these things. The Spirit of God concurred in this testimony. Now, he is spoken of as a joint witness with them : *We are his witnesses ;—and so also is the Holy Ghost*, Acts v. 32. Elsewhere, he is represented as a superior witness, confirming their testimony, and attesting themselves : *God also bearing them witness with signs, and wonders,—and gifts of the Holy Ghost*, Heb. ii. 4. By his miraculous gifts, he attested them as faithful witnesses. His own testimony concerning Jesus especially respected the perfection of his work as Mediator, his glory and power as exalted in human nature. As sent to the church, he is *the Spirit of Christ*, 1 Pet. i. 11. that is, of the Messiah. As Jesus is called *the Christ*, because he was *anointed* by the Spirit ; the latter is called *the Spirit of Christ*, because he is communicated by him in his mediatory character. We must, therefore, suppose that it is more directly his work, under the New Testament dispensation, to testify of Jesus, in this very respect. When it is said, John vii. 39. that *the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified* ; it is plainly intimated that the effusion of the Spirit was the

great evidence and testimony of the glory of Jesus as Mediator. To the same purpose is the language of Peter, Acts ii. 33. *Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted,—he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear.* Afterwards, he appeals to the effusion of the Spirit; as the external evidence of the exaltation of Jesus as a Prince, and a Saviour, ver. 36. *THEREFORE, let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus both Lord and Christ. As the Spirit of Christ testified before-hand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow; after both, he testified the satisfactory nature of the one, and the certainty of the other.*

It being, therefore, peculiarly incumbent on the apostles, to declare the resurrection and the glory of Christ, with the gift of the Holy Spirit to him, that he might communicate it to others; it is evident that they could not give their testimony in a proper manner, without ascribing these things to God. For as the resurrection respected a part of the humanity of Jesus, the glory that followed especially terminated on this nature. The apostles could not in strict propriety of language distinctly speak of his divine nature as suffering, dying, rising again, and being glorified. Besides it is granted, on all hands, that Jesus, as Mediator, was the Father's servant. Therefore the gift of the reward must be ascribed to the Father. For it was a judicial act, in consequence of that work which the Mediator had finished.

The propriety of their conduct will yet further appear, from the natural and necessary consequence of a belief of the mediatory character of Jesus. The attention of their hearers was first arrested by a declaration of the resurrection and glory of that very Person whom they had crucified. They could not disbelieve these things, because they were not merely attested by men of unexceptionable characters,



raeters, but by the Spirit of God. For they not only *saw* the ancient and well known symbol of the Divine presence abiding on each of the apostles, which would most probably bring to their recollection the testimony of the Baptist, that he who came after him should *baptize* them *with fire*, as the sensible emblem of the baptism of the Holy Ghost: but they *heard* unlearned men addressing every man in his own language. Therefore, unless they shut their eyes and stopped their ears, they could not deny the presence and operation of the Spirit, or doubt that he confirmed the testimony of the speakers. As soon as they were assured of the truth of the facts attested, they would naturally inquire into the extent of the character of Jesus. Thus, also, their minds would be prepared for receiving information. This mode of instruction *a posteriori* is far better calculated for the generality of minds, than that *a priori*. The apostles themselves learned the meaning of Christ's sayings, and the dignity of his Person, most fully from the event. Not till after his resurrection, did they understand that, when he said, *Destroy this temple, &c.* he spake of the temple of his body, and that the literal temple was only a type of this. When, as that King who brought salvation, he entered in humble triumph into Jerusalem, and was hailed by the multitude as he that came in the Name of the Lord; *these things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him*, John xii. 16.

We have already seen, that those who received the testimony of the apostles, must have considered the resurrection of Jesus as a Divine vindication from the charge of blasphemy, on the ground of which he was condemned; and of course, as a convincing evidence of the truth of that testimony, which he sealed with his blood. Therefore, al-

though it did not appear, from the compendious history of the Acts, that the apostles formally deduced this conclusion, we might be assured that they had it ultimately in their view. We might even suppose, that they particularly expressed it, on various occasions. For we know that they were uniform in their doctrine. And we find one of them expressly testifying, in another place, that Jesus was *declared to be the Son of God with power,—by the resurrection from the dead*, Rom. i. 4. that is, he was powerfully exculpated from the unjust sentence of his adversaries, when they condemned him for blasphemy against God, because he called himself his *Son*.

When the apostles spoke of Jesus as having ascended, as having received the promise of the Spirit, and as bestowing such precious gifts as repentance and remission; the Jews must necessarily have inferred, that he was exhibited as a divine Person. If they believed that he had such power and glory, they must also have believed his Deity. For their own prophetical writings declared that it was *God* who should thus *ascend*, and *receive gifts*, Psal. lxxviii. 18. When they knew that Jesus was exalted to give, even to his murderers, they could not but conclude that this was he who was described as *the God of their salvation*, who should receive gifts even *for the rebellious* \*. The very idea of his having power to forgive sins, would, according to their own principles, satisfy them that he was truly divine. For it was a received maxim with them, how silly soever it may appear to their more enlightened friends the Socinians, that *no one could forgive sins but God only*. In a word, they could not believe that Jesus would judge the world, without either believing that he was a divine Person, or re-

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\* Indeed, by an attribution of what strictly belongs to one nature to the whole person, it is expressly declared, that *God was—received up into glory*, 1 Tim. iii. 16.



nouncing that article of their Creed, so long received as matter of inspiration, that God was *Judge himself*, Psal. 1: 6.

Hitherto, I have spoken of *means* only ; God, in the general tenor of his operations, as regularly employing these, as if the success wholly depended on them ; and it being incumbent on his servants to observe the same method. But when it is considered, that the apostolical addresses were accompanied, not merely by the outward and extraordinary operations of the Spirit, but, to all who believed, by those that were inward and efficacious ; the argument acquires additional force. They would be led to form the conclusions already mentioned, not merely by the dictates of reason, and from the necessary connexion of the truths which they newly embraced with those formerly believed ; but especially by that Spirit of truth, who was promised to *lead into all truth*, and whose special work was to testify of Jesus.

## C H A P. XI.

*Proofs from the Book of Acts, that the Apostles taught the Doctrine of the Divinity of Christ.*

IT has been seen, that the apostles fulfilled the primary end of their mission, in preaching that Jesus was the Messiah ; and that the evidence by which they proved this doctrine, was such as necessarily implied that he was a divine Person. But this is not all. From their discourses, recorded in the Acts, and from other circumstances there narrated, it appears that they not only believed this doctrine, but taught it, even in addressing unbelievers.

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The prayer for direction in the choice of an apostle, in room of Judas, would seem to have been addressed to Jesus, as the searcher of hearts, chap. i. 24. Not only is he generally distinguished, in the New Testament, as *Lord*; but this designation is, in ver. 21. joined with that of Jesus. The language is; *Thou, Lord, who knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen*. Now, it cannot be refused, that the choice of an apostle properly belonged to the Head of the Church; and that this was a right which he claimed and exercised, while on earth. Therefore it is said, ver. 2. that he *gave commandments unto the apostles whom HE had chosen*. But if he was not the object of this prayer, though he chose all the rest, he had no hand in the choice of Matthias. On this supposition, a strange contradiction must be admitted, that his honours and privileges were diminished by his exaltation. The very end of the choice was, that one might *take part of this ministry and apostleship*. But if Jesus did not choose him, how could he be *an Apostle of Jesus*, that is, *one sent by him*?

The language used in this prayer, is perfectly applicable to the Saviour. For he declares, that *all the churches shall know that it is he who searcheth the reins and hearts*, Rev. ii. 23. Can we suppose, then, that he should either deprive himself or be deprived of this first opportunity, after his ascension, of displaying his omniscience and sovereignty, or of one so important?

Nor was it uncommon for his disciples to address him as the hearer of prayer. For we learn from the next chapter, that Peter, when *filled with the Holy Ghost*, (ver. 4.) applied the prophecy of Joel to Jesus, as the object of invocation, ver. 21. *And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord, shall be saved*. Now, these words evidently respect our Saviour. For that great  
and



and notable day of the Lord, mentioned in the preceding verse, is the same which is elsewhere denominated *the day of the Lord Jesus*, 1 Cor. v. 5. 2 Cor. i. 14. But there can be no reasonable doubt, that the prophecy respects him as the object of invocation. For another apostle expressly applies it to *the Lord Jesus*, Rom. x. 9.—13. It is remarkable that these words are immediately introductory to that language, of which our author has made such a handle; *Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God, &c.*

The apostle Peter, even while speaking of Jesus as Mediator, throws in a declaration strongly expressive of his Deity: *Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that he could be holden of it*, ver. 24. He does not mean that the resurrection of Jesus, as accomplished by God, was the reason why he could not be holden of death; as if the power of God, effecting this resurrection, were opposed to the power of death. For then he ought to have said; “It was not possible that he could be holden of death, because God raised him up.” But it is directly the reverse; *God raised him up,—because he could not be holden of death.* Indeed, God the Father, in the character of Judge, gave him this acquittal, because of the perfection of his sacrifice. But had Peter meant nothing more, he would most probably have said,—“because it was not *just*,” &c. Thus, it would have been, *οὐκ ἦν δίκαιον*. But instead of this, it is *οὐκ ἦν δυνατόν*. This expresses the natural dignity of the Person. Another word is added, which conveys the same idea,—*κρατεῖσθαι*. The literal sense of the expression is; “because it was not possible that he should be retained under its power. Could an inspired apostle apply this language to a mere man, how innocent soever? Does it not necessarily imply that the Person described is essentially *the Prince of Life*?”

When declaring the faith of David, that *of the fruit*  
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of his loins,—God would raise up Christ, the apostle throws in this important parenthesis, *according to the flesh*, ver. 30. If Jesus hath no other nature than the human, is not this as absurd a restriction as ever was used?

In the process of his discourse, he observes that Jesus, *being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Spirit, had shed forth that which they saw and heard*, ver. 33. Dr Horsley has remarked that here “the three Persons are distinctly mentioned in a manner which implies the divinity of each;” and that the expression *τὸ πατὴρ*, of the Father, in which we have “the substantive with the article prefixed, denotes “a person, whose character it is to be the Father;” pater-nity being “the property which individuates the Person\*.” There seems also to be something peculiar in the introduction of the essential Name *God*, before that of these personal designations, *the Father*, and *the Holy Ghost*. We cannot think of a reason for this peculiarity, unless it denote that, although according to the œconomy of our redemption, the exaltation of Jesus is more immediately ascribed to the Father, this is not to be understood exclusively. For here it seems to be ascribed to the *right hand* or *power of God* essentially considered. Indeed, the divine power of the Son as really appeared in his resurrection and ascension, as that of the Father. He was not merely *raised up*. He *rose again*†. He was not merely *exalted*. He *ascended*. He *entered into his rest*.

But the last part of the verse contains a striking proof of the Deity of Christ. *He hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear*. I need not say, that the apostle means the miraculous operation of the Spirit. But the effusion of the Spirit is never attributed to one confessedly a mere man.

\* Letters to Dr Priestley, p. 101.

† Rom. xiv. 9. 1 Cor. xv. 4. 12. 2 Cor. v. 15. 1 Thes. iv. 14.



man. Indeed it is said that, *through laying on of the apostles hands, the Holy Ghost was given*, chap. viii. 18. But what an important difference is there in the language! They are not said to *give*, or to *shed forth* the Spirit, either in his gifts, or in his graces. There is a reserve for a divine donor. They were mere instruments, whose work it was to preach the word, to baptize with water, and to observe the outward symbol of the imposition of hands. But God alone could make the means effectual. It is declared, that he *sheds on us abundantly the renewing of the Holy Ghost* *δια, through* Jesus Christ, Tit. iii. 5, 6. But though the same preposition is used in both places, it is in very different senses. In the first, it is not so much as said, that the Spirit was given *through the apostles*. It is connected with the mean used by them as instruments. For the imposition of hands was accompanied with prayer. *They prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost*, chap. viii. 15. In the other passage, it denotes, not the instrumental, but the meritorious cause. We are said to be renewed *through* Jesus Christ; but it is as *our Saviour*, who by his infinite merit hath purchased the influences of the Spirit. For *Jesus, that he might sanctify the people,—suffered without the gate*, Heb. xiii. 12.

As the apostles were mere instruments, they still acknowledged this. For they not only prayed for the influences of the Spirit, but ascribed all the communications of these to Jesus. Thus Ananias said to Saul; *The Lord, even Jesus—hath sent me, that thou mightest—be filled with the Holy Ghost*, chap. ix. 17. They represented the Spirit as communicated to others, not by them, as if the power had been theirs; but in the same manner in which he was communicated to them. Thus Peter testifies concerning the Gentiles; *As I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning*, chap. xi. 15. On this occasion, there

was not even the imposition of hands. The preaching of the word was the only mean : and the Spirit was given, at the very commencement of Peter's discourse, that it might appear to be wholly a divine work.

This spiritual baptism is the very circumstance singled out by John the Baptist, as the great external evidence of the superiority of Jesus : *I indeed baptize you with water ; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose : he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire*, Luke iii. 16. This evidence of superiority is, indeed, of an official kind : as the language denotes the unspeakably superior nature of his baptism. But when John referred his hearers to *sensible* evidence, it was necessary that he should specify an act of Jesus as Mediator. For all that he did among men was in this character. However, it seems to be ultimately resolved into his essential dignity. Therefore, he is said to be *ισχυροτερος*, *mightier*. John declares this to be a present attribute of Jesus : *He is mightier*. The essential power was present, although the effect was future ; *He SHALL baptize*. The debasing language, which John uses concerning himself, also shews that he was convinced of an essential, as well as of an official, distinction. For if Jesus was merely a messenger, John being the same, though the former be supposed to have been much superior to the latter, being equally servants of one infinitely superior to both, it is inconceivable that John should have declared, that he was unworthy to do the meanest office to Jesus, even to unloose the latchet of his shoe. He was not so much of a courtier as to speak in this style. He would have been chargeable with a gross falsehood. For the greatest distinction in rank that can be supposed to subsist between two servants of the same master, cannot so far debase the one, as to render him unworthy to perform the meanest office to the other. In-

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deed, from the Baptist's testimony, as recorded, John i. 15. it is clear, that he considered the essential dignity of Jesus as the foundation of his preference to himself with respect to office. This may be elsewhere illustrated.

The effusion of the Spirit must be viewed as a certain proof of the Deity of Christ, by all who believe that the Spirit is a Person. But although, according to the Socinian hypothesis, he should be considered as only the *power* or *virtue* of the Divine Being, more would be ascribed to Jesus than can belong to a creature. To suppose that almighty power may reside in a finite subject, is contrary, not to theology alone, but to sound philosophy. For nothing can be received in a proper sense, which exceeds the powers of the recipient. But *all power is given to Christ, in heaven, and in earth.*

There is no occasion, however, for abstract reasoning. The passage, in its connexion, clearly shews that Peter meant to exhibit Jesus as a divine Person. For his language concerning the gift of the Spirit evidently refers to what he had declared in the introduction. All the intermediate part of his discourse seems designed to shew, how he could attribute this power of giving the Spirit to one clothed with human nature. He says, ver. 16, 17. *This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel, and it shall come to pass in the last days, (saith God) I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, &c.* He first ascribes the work to God; *saith God, I will pour.* Then he ascribes it to Jesus; *He hath shed forth this.* The same verb is used in both places. Could any Jew doubt that he who ἐξέχεε *shed* or *poured out*, (ver. 33.) was essentially the same, who in ver. 17. is made to say, ἐκχέω, *I will pour out?*

What has been said clearly shews that this work could not be performed by Christ as a mere instrument. Besides, the very language excludes this view. As the Hebrew word,

word, correspondent to that here used, implies the idea of copiousness, the metaphor being taken from the effusion of water from the clouds, (Isa. xlv. 3.) it seems also to allude to the divine nature of the work ; God alone being the Father of the rain. To whomsoever these words, *I will pour out*, apply, the Spirit which he communicates is his own. For it follows ;—*Of my Spirit*. Now, if Christ be not God, the Holy Spirit could not be called *his*. But we know that he is expressly said to be *the Spirit of Christ*, 1 Pet. i. 11. And Christ himself says, *I will send him unto you* ;—a mode of speaking which must have discovered the most impious arrogance in any creature.

Again, as this Spirit *divideth* of his *gifts and graces unto every man severally as he will*, 1 Cor. xii. 11. either Christ does not participate in this sovereignty of operation, or he does. If he does not, he cannot with the least propriety be said to *shed forth* the Spirit. If he does, then he possesses divine sovereignty. For if it be absurdly refused that, in the passage referred to, the Spirit is spoken of as a Person, in order to make sense of the words, it will be necessary to suppose that the Father is meant, whose power he is said to be ; because sovereignty is the attribute of a person only.

Christ being said to be *exalted*, and at the same time, to have *poured out* the Spirit, it is evident that those who heard this discourse must either have supposed that the speaker asserted the ubiquity of Christ's human nature, or believed that he possessed a nature infinitely superior to that to which exaltation is properly ascribed.

In a word, the apostle refers to Psal. cx. 1. *The Lord said unto my Lord*. It is granted that David calls the Messiah *his Lord*. This is a term denoting dominion, and a right to worship ; as he acknowledges, concerning the same glorious Person, Psal. xlv. 11. *He is thy Lord, and worship*



*worship thou him.* But how could David be subject to Christ as *his* Lord, if he had no existence before he became *his* Son ?

Peter concludes his discourse with these remarkable words ; *Therefore, let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ,* ver. 36. that is, the Father hath judicially constituted him *Lord and Christ*, in human nature ; and by this effusion of the Spirit hath manifested that he really possesses all the dignity and power which these titles imply. He declares that Jesus is *Lord* ; giving him a character expressive, not of essence, but of authority ; yet, as we have seen, of such authority as entitles the possessor to divine worship. Was it, therefore, possible for the Jews to hear this, without being persuaded that the apostle meant to describe Jesus as a Divine Person ? Indeed, the preceding words, *Sit thou at my right hand*, can be understood in no other sense than as a call to the Son, in our nature, to a participation in all the glory of the Father. For *the Man whose name is the Branch*, not only *builds the temple of the Lord*, but *bears the glory*, and *sits and rules upon his throne*, that is, the throne of JEHOVAH. That they are described as equal in power, and in glory, is evident from what immediately follows ; *And the counsel of peace shall be between them both*, Zech. vi. 12, 13 \*.

In a subsequent discourse of the same apostle, on occasion of the curing of the lame man, he exhibits Jesus not only as Messiah, and particularly as the prophet whom Moses foretold, chap. iii. 22. but as the *Son of God*, ver. 13. In what sense he gives him this designation, appears from the words that follow ; *But ye denied the Holy One, and the Just, —and killed the Prince of Life*, ver. 14, 15. Now, the meaning of these expressions, as understood by his hearers,

must be determined from the manner in which they had been applied in their own scriptures. Had Peter called Jesus *the Holy One of God*, it might have been said that the Jews acknowledged this as a designation of the Messiah; without affixing to it the idea of Deity; because, as used in the Old Testament, it seems to respect him in his official character. But the question is, how did they understand this exclusive language, *the Holy One*, as there used? When Job says, *I have not concealed the words of the Holy One*, chap. vi. 10. could he be understood as speaking of any other than God? When the prophet sings, *The Holy One came from mount Paran*, could there be any doubt that the same glorious Person was meant, of whom it is said in the clause immediately preceding, *God came from Teman?* Hab. iii. 3. When they heard this language, Isa. xl. 25. *To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One*; could they hesitate to understand it as uttered by JEHOVAH, and as an express claim of the exclusive possession of perfect holiness? Had not God still revealed himself to his ancient people, as *the Holy One in the midst of them?* Hos. xi. 9. During the whole of the old dispensation, was he not acknowledged by the Church under this exclusive character, expressed in connexion with that mutual relation which subsisted between them in regard to his infinite holiness? Is it not for this reason, that he is so often celebrated as *the Holy One of Israel?* Therefore, could the Jews hear this well-known, this distinctive character of the true God applied to Jesus, without supposing that his disciples ascribed Deity to him, and even held him forth as that very God whom their fathers had worshipped? Or could the disciples of Jesus give him this character, without the least caution or restriction, and not be guilty of blasphemy, were he a mere man? Would the believing Jews have received  
their



their testimony without the slightest censure, if they had not been persuaded that Jesus was truly God?

The Jews knew that there was none *righteous* but their God. They knew that, in the revelations which he had made of himself, he had often exclusively claimed this character. They could not be ignorant that, in a way of eminence, it belonged to God only. They could form no idea of *songs from the uttermost part of the earth, even glory to the righteous*, Isa. xxiv. 16. but as directed to JEHOVAH, the only object of worship. Therefore, when they heard the apostles proclaiming Jesus, not only as *the Holy One*, put as *the Just*, they could not credit their testimony, without believing his Deity. Can it be supposed that he who, while on earth, would not receive the title of *good Master*, without shewing that this was properly an attribute of the Divine nature alone, would be so changed, in consequence of his exaltation, as to suffer his servants to apply to him the attributes of Deity, not merely without limitation, but κατ' ἐξοχὴν, in a way of eminence? Those who deny that he is God, must suppose a shocking absurdity, indeed; that he communicated the Spirit to his disciples, for the purpose of robbing the Father of his essential honour.

The believing Jews would not be startled at this language. They had not understood their own scriptures, if they did not formerly know that a Divine Person was promised as Messiah: and at any rate, the Spirit would now instruct them in this. They could not attentively read the prophecy of Zechariah, chap. ix. 9. concerning that *King* who was to come to them, without observing that the two great characters of their God were ascribed to him. For as Zechariah proclaims the King of Zion as *just and having salvation*, or a *Saviour*; this is the very language in which God had revealed himself to his people, Isa. xlv. 21.

*A just God, and a Saviour.* In the former passage, indeed, the name *God* is not mentioned. But they could not consistently understand it of a mere creature; because the demonstrative pronoun is used in that form which marks the super-eminent sense in which the attributes belong to the Person described; *Just and having salvation* HE. This seems to be equivalent to the additional language in Isaiah, *There is none beside me.* The form of the expression is precisely the same as that in Deut. xxxii. 4. *Just and right* HE; where Moses evidently describes the incomparable rectitude of the divine nature.

There is a beautiful contrast stated in the language of the Apostle. One man is not opposed to another. But *the Holy and Just One, to a man a murderer* \*. The antithesis is double. Wickedness is opposed to righteousness, and man to God. It would have been dreadful, had they merely preferred a wicked to a just man. But in this consisted their transcendent iniquity, that they preferred *a man*, and one who had forfeited all claim to the character of *holy and just*, to him who possesses these perfections absolutely and essentially. They rejected the great gift of divine grace, (Rom. viii. 32.) and *desired, that as an act of grace, a murderer should be given unto them* †.

But the Apostle does not only call Jesus *the Holy One, and the Just*, but *the Prince of Life*. He undoubtedly intends this as a Divine character. It denotes such a principality as can be ascribed to him alone who is the *author* of any thing. Thus it is used by the apostle of the Gentiles, when he speaks of *the Captain*, or rather, *the Author of our salvation, as made perfect through suffering*, Heb. ii. 10. and when he designs Jesus *the author of our faith*, chap. xii. 2. In this sense it is also used by profane writers ‡.

When

\* Ἀνδρα γονεα.

† Χρισθναί.

‡ The heathen were wont to celebrate their Supreme God as the author



When the apostle says, *Ye have put to death the Prince of Life*, if this character did not belong to Jesus before he was crucified, not only is the antithesis false, but that which is mentioned as the great constituent of their guilt had no existence. The apostles indeed declare, on another occasion, that God had *exalted him, with his right hand, a Prince and a Saviour*, chap. v. 31. But this by no means signifies that he received these characters in consequence of his exaltation; but only, that thus they were gloriously acknowledged by the Father as previously belonging to Jesus. For when *the Prince of Life* is said to be *killed*, the language implies that he was both *a Prince and a Saviour*, before his death. For these expressions are synonymous; the latter being a Hebraism, simply signifying that he is *the Prince of Salvation*, that is, *of life*. His sustaining this character seems to be mentioned as also the reason of his resurrection, (*whom God hath raised from the dead*) in the same sense in which the apostle had said, on a former occasion, that *it was not possible that he should be holden of death*. For in his resurrection, he not only obtained a judicial discharge as Mediator, but was manifested to be *the Son of God with power*, as being essentially *the Author of Life*.

The Jews were accustomed to adore God as their *life*, as *the strength* of it, who *held their souls in life*, and to confess that *the fountain of life* was with him \*. Therefore, when

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thor of nature, because they supposed that all things owed their being to him. Thus Cleanthes, in his hymn addressed to Jupiter, says,

ΖΕΥΣ ΦΥΣΕΩΣ ΑΡΧΗΓΕ—

Εκ σὺ γὰρ γένος ἐσμεν.

Thus it appears that they used the term, not as signifying a communicated authority, but an original and independent power of bestowing life †.

† See Burgh's Inquiry, p. 130.

\* Psal. xxvii. 1. lxvi. 9. xxxvi. 9.

the apostles declared that Jesus was the *Prince* and *Author of Life*, the language being equivalent to their own, they could not receive their testimony, without believing that he was that *fountain of Life* they had still adored, that he had *life in himself*, and that as a Prince he bestowed it, in a sovereign manner on whomsoever he pleased.

The apostle, having declared the dignity of the Person, proceeds to vindicate his claim to the honour of that work in which he and his brethren were the immediate agents: *And his Name—bath made this man strong*. Peter, who was a Jew, addressing himself to Jews, spoke in their own idiom. This was a phraseology with which they were perfectly acquainted. God had still used it in those revelations which he had made of himself to their forefathers. It was more ancient than their existence as a nation †. By the *name* of God, the posterity of Abraham were wont to understand God himself, especially with respect to his revealed character, and as opposed to the false apprehensions and unauthorized worship of those nations to whom he had not made himself known. Sometimes, it denoted all the divine perfections; and at other times, it had a particular respect to one. To the *Name* of God this people were accustomed to direct all their faith, love and worship; and to ascribe all their protection, deliverance and salvation; considering this as the same with directing or ascribing these to God himself. To this they used to attribute the miracles wrought in behalf of their fathers. They knew that his *Name* was *great in might*, Jer. x. 6. and interpreted his wondrous works as declaring that it was *near*, Psal. lxxv. 1. Therefore, when they were told by this plain fisherman, that the *Name* of Jesus had made the lame man whole, they would entertain no other idea than that he meant to give him a divine character.

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† Ex. vi. 3.



Was there any Jew who might be apt to suppose that this unlettered preacher introduced a new idiom ; and improperly ascribed miraculous virtue to this name, without meaning to represent the Person as the principal efficient cause of the miracle ? The apostle provides an antidote against this misapprehension, by also mentioning the instrumental cause : *His Name, THROUGH FAITH in his Name, hath made this man strong.* The multitude could not suppose that Peter spoke of two instruments ; of the *Name* itself as one, and of *faith* in it as another. Far less could they imagine that a mere instrument could be the object of faith. For *faith in a name* could convey to them no other idea than that of an act of worship directed to a divine Person. They not only knew the Name of the Lord as the object of faith \* : but that it had been prophesied concerning the Saviour, according to the translation then generally used, *In his Name shall the Gentiles trust*, Isa. xlii. 4. And they did not dare to speak in this manner of the name of any creature.

Is it said, that the Name of Jesus is here expressive of *power*, and that this language is used for preventing the mistake that the more ignorant might be apt to fall into, as though the apostles by their *own power had made this man to walk*, ver. 12 ? Still it is evident, that the Jews could not understand Peter as speaking of any power not essentially belonging to Jesus ; because the whole effect of *making* the man *strong* is ascribed to the Name of Jesus, as the principal efficient cause ; while this very Name is also represented as the object of faith, the instrumental.

They could not apprehend that the apostle meant to give no greater honour to Jesus, than that of being the medium which faith employed in its operation. For, to shew that it is its proper object, and also the author of that miracle produced by

\* Psal. ix. 10. lii. 9. Prov. xviii. 10. Mic. vi. 9.

its instrumentality, he is further exhibited as the author of that faith which terminated on himself: *Yea, the faith which is BY HIM hath given him this perfect soundness.* For *δια* here undoubtedly denotes the principal efficient cause, as it is often used \*. Thus Jesus is proclaimed as the author, both of the miracle, and of the mean by which it was effected. To him is the whole work ascribed. Nay, faith *in* him as its proper object, and *by* him as its author, is represented as so powerful, that the effect is instrumentally attributed to it: *Faith—hath given him perfect soundness.* Such language would have been highly improper, had not Peter meant to describe its object as divine. Had not this been the case, the apostles, while anxious to guard the multitude against ascribing too much honour to themselves, would have directed their eye to the Father. But while they declare that it was not their *own power* that effected the miracle, they ascribe it entirely to *the Author of Life*. While they deny that it was the fruit of their *holiness*; they give all the glory to *the Holy One and the Just*.

Thus, they shew that Jesus had discovered himself to be *the Author*, not only of natural life, by the external cure; but of that which is spiritual, *fulfilling the work of faith* in the heart. The faith in Jesus, which they avow, must have been very different from that of a Socinian. Indeed, it may be presumed, that the faith of the latter, though he had lived in the apostolic age, would never have been the mean of such a cure. It would have been too remote a cause for producing such an effect. For a Socinian faith in the Name of Jesus is, at best, merely one instrument in subordination to another. But from what we have seen, it may be fairly concluded, that those who received the testimony of the apostles, were persuaded that Jesus was that

*Messenger,*

† Rom. xi. 36. Gal. i. 1. 2 Tim. i. 14. Heb. ii. 10. ix. 14.



*Messenger*, of whom the Father had said, *My Name is him*, Ex. xxxiii. 21.

Even after Peter had declared that Jesus was that Prophet whom Moses foretold, lest his hearers should imagine that this was the highest honour that belonged to him, he returns to his former subject, and concludes this address by a declaration of his divine power: *Unto you first, God having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities*, chap. iii. 26. The Jews used to speak of one man as blessing another, by wishing or praying that he might be blessed. But they had no apprehension that this of itself could be effectual. They knew that God alone could bless, by truly conferring good, or delivering from evil. They knew that the man was blessed, whose *sin was covered*, and in whose spirit was no *guile*, Psal. xxxii. 1, 2. But they were also assured that it was the divine prerogative thus to *turn from iniquity*. Thence the whole church of Israel, under the name of Ephraim, is represented as concurring in this language; *Turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord my God*, Jer. xxxi. 18. Ephraim acknowledges the inutility of all external means without this efficacious operation; *Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke*. Therefore, it was a part of the solemn worship of the church to supplicate this very blessing. And she did so, with reiterated acknowledgments, that her salvation depended on the exercise of the converting power of the *Lord God of hosts*, Psal. lxxx. 3. 7. 19.

Had the Jews been simply told that Jesus was sent to *bless* them, they might have supposed it to be meant that, like their high priest, he would supplicate God for blessings, in their behalf. But it being declared that he was sent to bless them in *turning* them from iniquity; as this language denoted an efficacious blessing, of the most important kind, they

they could not believe the apostolical report, without being persuaded that he who should thus bless them was *God, even their own God*, whom their fathers had so long expected for this gracious purpose, and who, when he should come to bless them, was to *make all the nations glad, judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth*, Psal. lxvii. 4. 6.

When the apostles were brought before the Sanhedrim, to give an account of their conduct in healing the impotent man, the following question was put to them; *By what power, or by what name have ye done this?* chap. iv. 7. Without any hesitation, and with one voice, they give the very same account of the miracle as they had given to the multitude; declaring that it was *by the Name of Jesus*, ver. 10. They do not in the least qualify their language, as they certainly would have done, had they considered him as an agent essentially inferior. Indeed, as if they said too little in ascribing this temporal deliverance wholly to him, they amplify their ascription, by extending it to salvation of every kind; *And there is not salvation in any other*, ver. 12. The Jews knew that their God had claimed salvation as his prerogative, as equally incommunicable with his distinctive name, and as dependent on that absolute perfection which this name implied. For he had said, *I, even I am JEHOVAH, and beside me there is no Saviour*, Isa. xliii. 11. Can it, therefore, be supposed that they could hear the apostles assert, that there was not salvation in any other, without supposing that they believed him to be JEHOVAH? Or can we imagine, that these holy men would be so careless about the peculiar rights of Deity, if they had not believed that Jesus was the God of their salvation? They knew that God had not only expressed the unity of the Saviour as emphatically as the unity of the Godhead, but that he had joined them as inseparable; be-  
cause



cause he who acknowledges any Saviour but God, really denies the unity of his essence, by assigning his work to the creature. Thus, those who call themselves *Unitarians*, have no title to the name. For in their pretended zeal for the unity of God, they sacrifice the unity of the Saviour. That they may exclude the Son of God from the divine nature, they admit mere man into a divine office.

But the apostles prove that *there is not salvation in any other*, by the following argument; *For there is not another name under heaven, given among men, in which (δεῖ) we must be saved.* If Jesus be a mere creature, it was *necessary* for them to know the name of JEHOVAH as the great efficient cause of salvation, as well as the name of Jesus, which could only be the instrument. It was *necessary* for them to be saved in this superior name. If Christ be a creature, it was an impious falsehood, that there was *not another name given* for salvation. For God had revealed his own name to his people, as the object of their trust. He had pointed out *the Name of JEHOVAH as a strong tower into which the righteous should run, and be safe*, Prov. xviii. 10. The apostles can be vindicated from the charge of being false witnesses only by supposing that they considered the *name of Jesus*, as implying that of JEHOVAH. They knew, indeed, that this was the fact; that he was called *Jesus*, as being according to the meaning of the word in Hebrew, *the salvation of JEHOVAH*, or JEHOVAH *the SAVIOUR*.

If the *power* of Jesus be merely delegated, all their anxiety to denude themselves of any share of the glory, was vain. For they still left it with a creature; and were, therefore, as far from giving it to the rightful owner, as if they had kept it to themselves. Their conduct, indeed, bore a more threatening aspect to the honours of Deity, than if they had done so. For others would be more in danger of worshipping their glorified Master, than them.

When

When brought before the council a second time, they thus vindicate their conduct in teaching in the name of Jesus; *Him bath God exalted with his right hand, a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins*, chap. v. 31. It is evident that such power is ascribed to Christ, as cannot belong to any creature. We have seen that the whole church of Israel is introduced as acknowledging that conversion, issuing in true repentance, is a divine work. Those who were really convinced of sin, would be assured that this was the effect of the power of God. The most obdurate could not suppose that one man could *give repentance* to another. When they heard the apostles ascribe to Jesus, not the gift of *repentance* only, but of *forgiveness* also, they could not but think that they gave him that honour which their church had always appropriated to God. Even the unbelieving Jews were persuaded that *no one could forgive sins but God only*. The priests and Sadducees, who had imprisoned the apostles, ver. 17. would not be so favourable in their construction as to suppose, that they meant that Jesus had merely the power of *declaring forgiveness*. They could not have perceived the propriety of asserting that he was *exalted* for this end. For it must naturally have occurred to them, that he could have done this work far better on earth. And they would not suppose that there were any in heaven that needed such a declaration. The Sadducees, indeed, were more *rational* believers, than to imagine that there could be a heaven of *spirits*.

That Stephen preached the same doctrine, is evident from the account which he gives of the vision at Mount Sinai, Acts vii. 30. For he declares that it was an *Angel of the Lord*, who appeared in the bush and said, *I am the God of Abraham*. He means no created angel. For no Jew of that age would have ascribed such language to a creature.



creature. Besides, he expressly calls this Angel *the Lord*, or JEHOVAH, ver. 33. Had he believed that there was but one Person in the divine essence, he could not have thought of calling him an *angel* or *messenger*. For by whom could he be *sent*? But he uses that language which was well known to his fathers. They believed that the Angel of the divine presence, the Angel of the covenant, was JEHOVAH. He evidently describes him as that Angel who gave the law by the ministration of other angels in the character of his servants ; and who directed the church in the wilderness, ver. 38.

That the protomartyr had Jesus in his eye, in the whole of his narrative, appears from his giving him that title of divine perfection formerly explained. He calls him *the Just One*, ver. 52. This is also undeniable, from his addressing Jesus as the object of worship. He would have recoiled with horror from such impiety, had he not believed that Jesus was the *God of Abraham*. *They stoned Stephen calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit*, ver. 59.

Dr P. observes, that “ the word *God* is not in the original, as our translators have signified, by their directing it “ to be printed in the Italic character : so that this text by “ no means signifies that Stephen acknowledged Christ to “ be God, but only informs us that Stephen addressed himself to Christ, whom he had just seen in person, in a state “ of great exaltation and glory \*.” The word *God* is, indeed, a supplement. But the want of it, in the original, instead of proving that Stephen did not acknowledge Christ to be God, is a more unexceptionable proof that he did, than if it had been used by the inspired historian. For, in this case, the adversaries of the Deity of Christ would have urged that an important distinction was stated between the

\* Famil. Illustr. p. 37.

the respect which the protomartyr paid to God, and that which he paid to Jesus.

The Doctor is determined, if possible, to shew that Stephen, though he did *address*, that is, *worship* Jesus, did not consider him as God. He quotes these words : *He, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God ; and said, Behold I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God, ver. 55, 56.* Then he observes, “ This very language clearly implies “ that he considered the *Son of man*, and *God*, as distinct “ persons.” This may be admitted, if properly explained. For the term *God* often denotes the Father, although not as confining the Godhead to him. But our author undoubtedly means, that Stephen excludes the Son by the use of this word. If, in his sense, the martyr *considered* them as distinct Persons, it must have been because he *saw* them as distinct. For the only ground that Dr P. has for declaring what Stephen considered, is Stephen’s own declaration as to what he *saw*. It must follow therefore, that God has a bodily right hand ; and that Stephen saw this with the natural eye, as distinctly as the human nature of Jesus.

Although Socinians and Materialists may not startle at this inference, the more sober part of mankind will understand the language as metaphorical, and as containing an allusion to the tokens of dignity among men. Stephen speaks of *the Son of man* as *at the right hand of God*, to denote the exaltation of the human nature, in union to the divine. For whatsoever *the glory of God* is, Jesus is described as a partaker of it. The Jews did not understand Stephen’s language as Dr P. does. They unanimously considered it as blasphemy against God. Therefore, *they stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord.* When he declared that Jesus was the Messiah, and accused them



as his murderers, they bore with him. When he proceeded to accuse them of having *always resisted the Holy Ghost*, and of breaking the law given them; they vented their indignation, only by gnashing on him with their teeth. But they were accustomed to affix such a meaning to the language under consideration, that they could not hear him a moment longer. They cast him out of the city, as one whose blood would defile it, because of his supposed blasphemy; according to the divine ordinance with respect to this crime, Lev. xxiv. 14. They put him to death also in the manner appointed. For the blasphemer was to be stoned by all the congregation, ver. 16. as well as the person who enticed to the worship of other gods, Deut. xiii. 6.—10. They probably thought that he was guilty of both these crimes.

But though they had formerly been in any hesitation as to the evidence of his guilt, they could be in none afterwards. For he persisted in his supposed crime, during the very execution of the sentence. *They stoned Stephen, calling upon Jesus.* Dr P. informs us, however, that “the word which is here, and in 1 Cor. i. 2. rendered to *call upon*, is far from being appropriated to *invocation*, as peculiar to the divine Being. It is the same word that is rendered to *appeal to*, as when Paul appeals to Cæsar \*.” Some of our author’s predecessors have denied that Stephen did invoke our Saviour; asserting that his words should be rendered, *Lord of Jesus*. But our author finds that this ground is not tenable. Therefore, he acknowledges that Jesus is the object of this address. But he endeavours to evade the consequence of this confession; first, by shewing that religious invocation is not here meant; and secondly, by gallantly resisting the force of some other texts, which according to our translation, oppose this view. As to the first, it would seem that his mind was by no means distracted by a variety of evidence. For he refers only to those

those places in which the word signifies an *appeal*. But does he seriously think that Paul *appealed to* Cæsar in the same sense in which Stephen *called upon* Jesus? Did Paul *commend his spirit into the hands* of the Roman Emperor? I ask the Doctor's pardon. He may perhaps suppose that he did, when he ventured his *body* in Cæsar's hands.

But he adds, that the same word “ is used when a person “ is said to be *called* by any particular name; as Judas “ *called* Iscariot, &c. There can be no doubt, therefore, “ but that it has the same meaning both in 1 Cor. i. 2. “ and also in Acts ix. 21. *Is not this he that destroyed them “ who called on this name in Jerusalem?* that is, all who “ called themselves *Christians*. It is so rendered, Jam. ii. “ 7. *Do they not blaspheme the worthy Name by which ye “ are called?* or, as it is more exactly rendered, *which is “ called, or imposed, upon you?* that is, by which ye are “ distinguished.” But because this word *sometimes* simply signifies to *call* or *denominate*, must it *always* bear this sense? It is indeed questionable, whether the expression in James does not respect the solemn invocation of this name in baptism. At any rate, a gentleman who has taught Greek ought to pay some regard to the construction. And undoubtedly the language of James, and also that in Acts xv. 17. is very different from what we have in 1 Cor. i. 1. and Acts ix. 21. When it signifies, *called upon you*, it is *ονομα το επικληθεν εφ’ υμας*. But can our author produce any example of such an expression as *τοις επικαλεσμενοις το ονομα*, having the same meaning? Both the Seventy, and the writers of the New Testament, use the expressions differently, the former in a *passive*, and the latter in an *active* sense.

The reason assigned by Dr P. for refusing to understand these words, 1 Cor. i. 1. *With all who in every place call upon the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ*, as signifying that adoration “ which is due to the one living and true God,”



is a striking proof of the audacity of error. That this is not meant “is evident,” he says, “from the very next words; *Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ*; where Christ is evidently spoken of as distinct from God \*.” Because Christ is not mentioned as the same Person with the Father, who, in the New Testament, is more generally distinguished by the name *God*, therefore he is not the object of adoration; though in the very words from which the pretended proof is derived, *grace* is prayed for from him, as directly as from the Father. It will be difficult for our author to prove, that *Acts ix. 21.* refers to the disciples being called *Christians*; as it appears that they were not known by this name for some considerable time after the event narrated in that passage, chap. xi. 26.

But notwithstanding the laborious attempts of Socinians, to avert the force of the argument arising from the use of this term, there are some passages, in which it occurs, that, as far as I know, they have not dared to meddle with; as *2 Tim. ii. 22. Rom. x. 13, 14.* When Paul speaks of those *ἐπικαλουμενων*, *that call on the Lord out of a pure heart*; when he quotes these words from Joel, *Whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord, shall be saved*; the sense is so restricted by the connexion, that they cannot deny that divine worship is meant. This, then, is the proper question; if the invocation, granted in the case of Stephen, can be understood in any sense, but as “peculiar to the divine Being?”

As Dr P. admits that the protomartyr did *invoke* Jesus, we would wish to know for what end he did it, if he did not mean to *worship* him? Stephen himself does not leave us at a loss as to his design. For this was the substance of his address, *Lord Jesus, receive my spirit*. Did he *turn to* him as only one of the *Saints* †? If he did, was not the

\* *Ibid.*† *Job. v. 1.*

closing act of his life an act of abominable idolatry? Did he not acknowledge Jesus as one that had *power over the spirit*? And does not this belong to God only? Our author seems to insinuate, that the “great exaltation and glory” of Christ might be Stephen’s apology. But will a Protestant maintain that any creature, in the eternal state, may be lawfully called upon in any sense? If Jesus be not God as well as man, the disciple made a far worse choice than his master, who, as man, commended his spirit into the hands of his Father. But it is evident, that Stephen surrendered his spirit to Jesus as *Lord, both of the dead, and of the living*.

He also addressed Jesus as the God of pardoning mercy. For *he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge*, ver. 60. There is, undoubtedly, no change of the object of invocation. Stephen still addresses *the same Lord over all, who is rich unto all that call upon him*, Rom. x. 12.

This passage has still been very puzzling to Socinians: and their perplexity must continue, if they adhere to their principles, till awfully removed by a discovery of *the Son of man on the right hand of power*. Even Dr P.’s embarrassment on this subject appears, not only from what we have seen, but from what he says in his History of Opinions. “To conclude, as some have done, from the single case of “Stephen, that all Christians are authorized to pray to “Christ, is like concluding that all matter has a tendency “to go upwards, because a needle will do so when a magnet is held over it. When they shall be in the same circumstances with Stephen, having their minds strongly “impressed with a vision of Christ sitting at the right hand “of God, they may then, perhaps, be authorized to address themselves to him as he did; but the whole tenor “ of



“ of the scriptures proves that otherwise we have no authority at all for any such practice \*.”

I know of none who conclude, that Jesus is the object of worship from the *single* case of Stephen. All who believe that Stephen worshipped him, are as fully persuaded that he was *called upon* by all primitive Christians. But although we had no other express instance, that of Stephen, all circumstances considered, would be unexceptionable as an example. The conclusion from this case would not be quite so absurd as that to which it is compared by Dr P. It would only be “ like concluding that” *every needle*, or “ all matter” of *the same kind*, would go upwards, if a magnet of sufficient power were held over it.

But the similitude implies another obvious fallacy ;—that Jesus can have an attractive influence on none of his disciples, like that exemplified in the case of Stephen, unless they discern him with the bodily eye. They are all composed of such inert *matter*, that they cannot ascend to him in adoration, unless the attractive power affect their senses. A sensible discovery of the very matter of the body of Christ; not an apprehension of *his majesty* by faith, is the only *probable* authority for worship. After this, our author, instead of ridiculing the doctrine of the Trinity, ought to speak respectfully even of the absurd doctrine of Transubstantiation. For he who can suppose that knowing Christ *after the flesh*, is that which tends most to exalt our ideas of him, and *perhaps* authorizes adoration, ought to be tender of those who practically indulge themselves in the pleasing illusion. The true church of Christ hath hitherto believed that *the flesh profiteth nothing*. But it would seem that she hath been grievously mistaken. For a view of this “ may authorize Christians to address themselves to” Jesus as Stephen did ; that is, to make him the object of prayer. As

\* Vol. i. p. 47.

for those poor souls *who have not seen, and yet have believed*, the Lord Jesus can be no magnet to them. They know, by faith in the Divine word, that the Son of man *standeth on the right hand of God*. Their faith discerns him within the veil. By this spiritual eye they *see the King in his beauty*. And though they have *not seen* him with the bodily eye, yet believing, they may rejoice, even with joy unspeakable and full of glory, receiving the end of their faith, the salvation of their souls, (1 Pet. i. 8, 9.) But it would be venturing a great deal too far, to commend their spirits to him. They do not *sensibly* discern him *at the right hand of God*: and how can they *otherwise* be certain, that he is there? Without this species of assurance, according to our author, they would pray at random. Thus, instead of a *rational* system of religion, we have a *material* one, nearly as gross as that of the church of Rome.

He seems also to support her doctrine in another respect. He supposes that such a vision may perhaps authorize an address to Christ, "although the whole tenor of the scripture proves that *otherwise* we have no authority at all for any such practice." On the very same ground may the worship of saints and angels be vindicated. For the only meaning that our author's words can bear, is, that the whole tenor of scripture proves that we have no authority for any such practice, *but in the case* of seeing Jesus with the bodily eye. If, therefore, one should happen to see an angel, or one of the glorified saints, as the disciples saw Moses and Elias, the heavenly vision *may perhaps authorize* worship.

The absurdity of supposing an *occasional* object of worship, is perfectly consonant to the *philosophical Unitarianism* of *occasional personality*. It completes the system. He who has been, or who might have been, occasionally a divine Person, may, doubtless, be occasionally an object of worship. According to Dr P.'s concession, when all the



saints shall see Jesus *as he is*, it may perhaps authorize them *all* to address themselves to him as Stephen did. If so, it may be the safest course to try the same exercise in this life. The worship of heaven cannot well be idolatry on earth. Those who will not bow the knee to Jesus now, must do it very awkwardly when he comes in his glory.

Dr P. has overlooked the circumstance which properly renders the conduct of Stephen a sufficient example for universal imitation. We are not to suppose that the good man was in a pious reverie. For, according to the testimony of inspiration, he was *full of the Holy Ghost*.

We may safely conclude, that Philip, the Evangelist, preached the divinity of Christ. For the confession of the Eunuch respected this doctrine; *I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God*, chap. viii. 37. This cannot be understood as merely an acknowledgment of Jesus as Messiah. For the term *Christ* being strictly expressive of this character, the Eunuch's confession would, in this case, be the merest solecism; "I believe that Jesus, the Messiah, is the Messiah." Unless Philip had preached Jesus, not merely as Messiah, but as a Divine Person, there would have been no propriety in the confession. For we must understand it as reduplicating on the doctrine previously delivered.

Indeed, though we have no summary of Philip's discourse, it is evident that he could not give a consistent view of the passage from which he *preached Jesus*, without proclaiming his divinity. For as these words, ver. 33. *Who shall declare his generation?* undoubtedly denote his endless life, as the Father of a seed that *no man can number*, they necessarily imply divine power and glory. For how can a mere man really create again, and give spiritual life to those who are *dead in trespasses and sins*? How could the *taking away* of his life be the cause of life to them, were he not

in another respect *the Fountain of Life*? How could he act the part of a Father, to those whom he could not so much as *number*?

The conversion of Paul has been justly viewed as a striking proof of the truth of Christianity. The account given of it affords as convincing evidence of the divinity of Jesus. It is evident that Paul, when he heard the voice from heaven, considered it as that of a Divine Person. But he seems at a loss to know how he should be persecuting him. *He said, Who art thou, Lord?* chap. ix. 5. When he found that it was Jesus who spoke to him, he did not change his address, or acknowledge his mistake. To this very Jesus does he direct his prayer: and this expresses the language of absolute submission to his will: *He, trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* ver. 6.

Ananias also, when he received a command to go to Paul, in like manner addresses himself to Jesus: *Lord, I have heard by many of this man, &c.* ver. 13. That he considered Christ as speaking to him, and therefore directed his reply to the same Person, is evident from his saying to Paul, ver. 17. *The Lord, (even Jesus that appeared to thee in the way as thou camest), hath sent me.* The same disciple speaks of all the saints as Christ's;—*thy saints*, ver. 13. And there was not one of them who would have reckoned it an honour to be the property of a mere man. He describes them all as worshippers of Jesus, ver. 14. *He hath authority—to bind all that call on thy name.* The genuine sense of this expression appears from the present conduct of Ananias, one of the persons thus described. Jesus is also introduced, as declaring that Paul was a *chosen vessel unto him*. And surely, such language does not become any creature. One great design of the mission of Ananias is, that, by his instrumentality, Jesus might communicate the

Holy



Holy Ghost to Paul, ver. 17. *Jesus hath sent me, that thou mightest—be filled with the Holy Ghost.*

If the worship of Christ be idolatry, Paul, it must be acknowledged, was provided with a very bad spiritual director. For Ananias undoubtedly exhorts him to pray to Jesus. *Wash away thy sins*, he says, *calling on the Name of the Lord*, chap. xxii. 16. That Jesus is meant, cannot reasonably be refused. For he is the person last mentioned, as *that just One* whom Paul was to see, *the voice of whose mouth* he should bear, and *whose witness* he should be unto all men, ver. 14, 15. This is also evident from the connexion of these words, *Wash away thy sins*. They undoubtedly refer to baptism. For it is said immediately before; *Arise, and be baptised*. It was in this ordinance that he was to *call on the Name of the Lord*, by devoting himself to him, apprehending the merit of his blood, and imploring the communication of his Spirit.

Would Paul believe that Jesus could make him an instrument in enlightening the understandings, and changing the hearts of sinners, and in delivering them from the power of Satan? Would he believe that Jesus could give them pardon and glory, that he was the object of faith, and that faith in him could be the mean of sanctification? Would he confide in him for deliverance from the heathen; or even submit to receive a commission from him:—and yet consider him as a mere man? But Paul assures Agrippa that Jesus said to him; *I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister, and a witness;—delivering thee from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee; to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith which is in me*, chap. xxvi. 16.—18.

Did not Paul, immediately after his conversion, testify his full conviction of the divinity of Jesus? *Straightway he*

*preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God, chap. ix. 20.* It would be ridiculous to explain this language as signifying, that Paul merely proclaimed the character of Jesus as Messiah. This he also did. *For, he confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is the very Christ, ver. 22.* But here we have only one branch of his doctrine. It included another, distinct from this, but not less important. For, as the language may be literally read, *He preached the Christ, or Messiah, that this is the Son of God.* Would it be worthy of an inspired historian to say; “He preached the Messiah, that he is the Messiah?” That the first expression, *τον Χριστον, the Christ*, is to be understood as particularly referring to Jesus in his official character, is evident from the manner in which it is used elsewhere, in regard to the preaching of Paul. For, when addressing the Thessalonians, he opened and alleged that *this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is ο Χριστος, the Christ*, chap. xvii. 3.

Did not Paul, through life, offer the sacrifice of praise to Jesus as God, for the honour he had put on him, and the strength he had given him? We have his own testimony. *I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me worthy, putting me into the ministry; who was before a blasphemer, &c.* Does he not ascribe his conversion wholly to the mercy, grace and power of Jesus? *But I obtained mercy;—and the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant, with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus, 1 Tim. i. 12.—14.* If Paul viewed him as a mere man, did he not blaspheme God? Did he not prostitute the attributes of Deity, by ascribing them to Jesus?

When the same apostle would give a pattern of preaching to those who were themselves bishops, he exhorts them to *feed the church of God, which he had purchased with his own blood, chap. xx. 28.* The enemies of the Deity of Christ cannot agree among themselves, with re-  
spect



spect to this text. Some of the Polish Socinians acknowledge that the original word is Θεός, and pretend that this designation is given to Christ *officially*; or that God the Father is meant, and that the blood of Christ is called *his*, because of the intimate union between them, notwithstanding diversity of essence \*.

Dr P. is not so liberal in his concessions. "In the most ancient manuscripts," he says, "this text is, *Feed the church of the Lord*, which generally signifies Christ †." By the way we may observe that, although our author here grants that the term *Lord* has *generally* this meaning, when he descends to particulars, there are a great many exceptions. It can never *signify Christ*, however strong the collateral evidence, where it can signify any thing unfriendly to the Socinian system. Of this we have a striking proof in the paragraph immediately preceding, where that passage is introduced, *And thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid*, &c. Heb. i. 10. Though there can be no connexion in the apostle's reasoning, if these words refer not to Christ, yet they must be understood of the Father alone.

Only three manuscripts are mentioned as reading *the Lord*; while all the rest, some of which are reckoned of at least equal authority, give the language according to our version. A few of these join *the Lord* with *God*. But this makes no difference as to the sense, but rather confirms the ordinary reading. It deserves attention, that *the church of the Lord* is a phrase never used in the New Testament; whereas we often read of *the church of God*.

But even supposing that the true reading were, *the church of the Lord*, as respecting Christ, the passage would still afford a striking proof of his Deity. For it is undeniable that the church is *God's* (1 Cor. i. 2. x. 32. xi. 22, &c.) that it is as much his property as a man's house is his, to the

\* Vid. Catech. Racov.

† Famil. Illust. p. 36.

the exclusion of every other proprietor. Therefore we read of *the house of God, which is the church of the living God* (1 Tim. iii. 15). But if the church be also *Christ's*, if it be *his own house*; it must necessarily follow that he is *the living God*, (Heb. iii. 6. 12.)

Our author adds; “Also in some copies it is, *which he purchased with blood*; that is, the blood of his “Son.” He evidently stumbles on this stone. For when he tells us, that “*the Lord* generally signifies Christ,” it might be supposed that he would adhere to this sense of the passage, as supported by “the most ancient manuscripts.” But the very next sentence is at war with it. The person is changed. The term *Lord* is applied to the Father. It avails not, it would seem, though all the members of a text should contradict each other, if the whole be preserved from contributing any thing to the doctrine of Immanuel.

He further observes that “as the *blood of God* is a phrase “which occurs no where else in the scriptures, we ought “to be exceedingly cautious how we admit such an expres- “sion.” It would be more honest and consistent to say, that, as the Bible contains such a doctrine, as that *the man, the fellow of JEHOVAH*, could be *smitten*, we “ought to be “exceedingly cautious how we admit such a *book*.”

A very sage observation brings up the rear: “If Christ “was God, his blood could not be his blood as God, but as “man.” Can our author prove that God could not unite to his own perfect and impassible nature one infinitely inferior; or that, in this case, what properly belonged to the inferior nature, could not be ascribed to the person, as denominated from the superior?



# VINDICATION

## OF THE

### DOCTRINE OF SCRIPTURE, &c.

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#### BOOK III.

OF THE EVIDENCE OF THE DEITY OF CHRIST, FROM THE  
USE OF THAT EXPRESSION, THE SON OF GOD.

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AS the Evangelists, in a great variety of passages, call Jesus *the Son of God*, I once thought of illustrating this character among the proofs of his Divinity from the three first gospels. But this argument opening a wide field, it seemed more proper to view it distinctly. Nor could it appear in that lustre of evidence which naturally belongs to it, were not some attention paid to the use of this expression by other inspired writers. But when this striking phraseology is viewed in connexion with those various ideas which are combined with it in the language of inspiration, like the rays of light concentrated in one point, its force is greatly increased, and all the objections of adversaries are *as a thread of tow when it toucheth the fire*.

That

That I may, as far as possible, do justice to the subject, I shall inquire, how this character was understood by saints under the Old Testament; in what sense it was proclaimed by the Father; how it was interpreted by holy angels, by devils, and by the enemies of Christ; what ideas it conveyed, as expressed by Jesus himself; what sense believers affixed to it during his abode on earth; and how it was applied to him by the apostles and others, after his ascension.

It may be previously observed, that when Christ is called *the Son*, without any addition, it is to be understood in the same sense as when he is more particularly denominated *the Son of God*.

## C H A P. I.

*Of the Faith of Saints under the Old Testament; and of the Testimony of the Father, and of holy Angels, concerning Christ as the Son of God.*

**B**ELIEVERS under the Old Testament knew the Messiah as a Son begotten of the Father; as it is said, Psal. ii. 7. *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.* They considered this as a proper generation, and as implying unity of essence. For they embraced this Son as the object of their faith, and were assured of the blessedness of all who did so. Thus it is said, ver. 12. *Kiss ye the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way; when his wrath is kindled but a little: blessed are all they that put their trust in him.* They could not have this assurance, without believing his Deity. For they were taught by the same authority, that *cursed is the man that trusteth in man*, Jer. xvii. 5.

They



They knew that this *confidence* was that which belongs to God alone, Isa. xlviii. 2. 1. 10. They were persuaded that, if they refused to *receive* and *rely* on him as the proper object of their faith, they subjected themselves to eternal misery; they would *perish from the way*. Can any one, therefore, who candidly considers their faith in the Messiah, as here declared, assert of the Jews without distinction, that they never expected “any other than a man like themselves\*?”

Solomon introduces the Wisdom of God as giving this testimony to the sons of men; *When there were no depths, I was brought forth.—Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth*, Prov. viii. 24, 25. That this can only be understood as the language of a person, has been elsewhere proved. To the same purpose is the faith of the church expressed by Micah: *Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting*, chap. v. 2.

Long before the incarnation, the church knew this glorious Person as *in the bosom of the Father*, as *the Son of his love*; according to that divine testimony, *Then was I by him, as one brought up with him, or as a foster-son, and I was daily his delight*, Prov. viii. 30. They believed in him as the *Counsellor*, Isa. ix. 6.

They acknowledged him as a Son whose nature was ineffable. Therefore Agur saith; *What is his Son's Name, if thou canst tell?* Prov. xxx. 4. *Name* must be understood in the same sense here, as in the clause immediately preceding, where it is used with respect to the Father. Now, they knew his name; but not the full import of it, as expressing his incomprehensible nature. They believed that the nature of the Son was as incomprehensible as that of the Father. Therefore are these two questions joined, with a note of defiance equally applicable to both; *What is his Name, or his Son's Name, if thou canst tell?*

They

\* Hist. of Corrupt. vol. i. p. 2.

They knew that the *Son given* should be *the Mighty God*; and *the Father of Eternity*, Isa. ix. 6. JEHOVAH had called those gods, to whom his word came. But his ancient people were assured that he had never given this appellation of *the Mighty God* to any of the sons of men; or of *the Father of Eternity* to man who is as grass. But our author says; “These titles may not express what Christ is, but what God will manifest himself to be in him, and by him; so that, in the dispensation of the gospel, God, the wise and benevolent author of it, will appear to be a *Wonderful Counsellor, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace*\*.” This is a proof of the great pains which this Gentleman takes to make that *crooked*, which God hath made *straight*. If the holy Scripture must be interpreted in this way, in order to the attainment of its true meaning, it were far better entirely to renounce it. For at this rate, it cannot rationally be supposed to be given by God as a rule of faith, as well as of manners, not to the learned only, but to the illiterate, who always constitute by far the greatest part of mankind. This plan of interpretation directly tends to bewilder the mind in an endless labyrinth. It gives the lie to that very system which it is meant to support. For while Reason is made the test of divine Truth, it must also be supposed that Truth is obvious to Reason, as being revealed in language intelligible to the bulk of mankind. For this end, it must be used according to its common acceptation. But while the avowed design of what is called *rational theology* is to relieve men from those fetters of implicit faith, in which, it is pretended, they are still held by all but Socinian teachers; its real tendency is only to give a change of fetters. Though a particular version of Scripture be excellent, new light may be thrown on various passages, by attention to the original languages.

But

\* Famil. Illustr. p. 29.



But if it is only such an acquaintance with these as will enable us to twist them into all the forms within the compass of fancy, that can either secure us in a doctrine fundamental in religion, or deliver us from one destructive to it, the mass of mankind must still depend on their teachers.

Our author indeed says, in the preface to these Illustrations; “ To those who lived in the times in which these books “ were published, they were no doubt very intelligible; “ the language in which they were written, and the customs “ to which they allude, being perfectly known to them. “ But what was easy to them, a long course of time has “ rendered extremely difficult to us.—In this state of “ things, the *ignorant* and *unlearned* are very liable to *wrest “ the scriptures*, as the apostle Peter says they ever have “ done.” But how dark soever some passages may be, which allude to customs now unknown, it was indispensably requisite that all things, necessary to salvation, should be revealed in language intelligible to all, in every age and nation, who come to the word as *new-born babes*. To suppose the contrary, is to impeach the wisdom of God. For *whatever was written aforetime, was written for our learning*. It is not the darkness of dead languages, nor ignorance of ancient customs, that renders the scripture unintelligible; but *the wisdom of this world, leaning to our own understanding*, and not *trusting in the Lord with all our heart* for the gift of that Spirit who is promised to *lead into all truth*. In the words referred to by our author, Peter does not speak of the *unlearned* only, as *wresting the scriptures to their own destruction*, but also of the *unstable*, who, as he has already said, *having known the way of righteousness, turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them;—bring in damnable heresies, denying the Lord who bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction*.

Our

Our author is a living proof that his plan of interpreting scripture throws the mind into a state of scepticism as to any determinate meaning. For, in his interpretation of this remarkable prophecy, he clearly shows the perplexity of his mind. "These titles *may not* express what Christ "is," &c. Those who have wrote on Sacred Philology have been at great pains to instruct the world in the meaning of this phrase, *His name shall be called*, and of others of the same kind; informing us that they signify what one shall really be, or what he shall appear to be. But these writers, with all their mighty learning, have been only laborious triflers. Frequently as it occurs to our author, they have never once attended to this beautiful figure of speech, by which the name of a son is expressive, not of what he is himself, but of what his Father is. For all the cramp terms in Rhetoric, there is not one for this. It is to be hoped that our author, when next he has occasion to treat of this figure, will favour us with a distinctive name for it, that henceforth, for the benefit of posterity, it may be inserted in all the rhetorical systems. So important a discovery, indeed, deserves a place in his own *Lectures on Oratory and Criticism*.

But it happens rather unluckily for his theory, that the name is prefaced with this declaration, *The government shall be upon his shoulder*. Now, it cannot be refused that this respects the Son, who is mentioned immediately before, and signifies that he is to bear the whole weight of it. Therefore, it must be very strange, if not one of all the following characters expresses what this Governor himself should be. His government is particularly described in the next verse: and is there not a single word concerning his Person? It is also unfavourable to our author, that one of these names is elsewhere assumed by the Son. For it has been proved, that it was he who said to Manoah, *Why askest thou thus*  
after



*after my name, seeing it is Wonderful*, Jud. xiii. 18. It is also certain that these names were not actually imposed upon Jesus, which Dr P.'s theory necessarily requires. Therefore they can only be viewed as expressing his real character.

But the Doctor is armed *cap-a-pie* against any such argument. "If this name," he says, "be supposed to characterize Christ himself, it will by no means favour the common doctrine of the Trinity." We have a very sage reason, indeed:—"because it will make him to be the Father, or the first person, and not the Son, or the second person." He evidently grants that these words may be viewed as characterizing Christ, both here, and afterwards when he shews in what sense they will apply to him. But the very idea of the doctrine of the Trinity puts him so much off his guard, that he produces an objection which strikes as directly against his own application of the passage to our Saviour, as against ours. "It will make him to be the *Father*." If so, why should Dr P. take the trouble to shew how these words will apply to the *Son*. For if his objection be just, they cannot apply to him in any sense.

But what is the foundation of this weighty objection? Christ is called *The Everlasting Father*. The amount of this reasoning is, that he who is a Son in one respect, cannot be a Father in any other. But still, the character will apply to the Son, without infringing on the peculiar property of the Father. He may be called *the Father of Eternity*, which is the literal translation, as being *the Author of Eternal Salvation*, Heb. v. 9. in the same manner as it is laid, *Hath the rain a father?* Job xxxviii. 28. respecting its cause or first principle. Or, he may be thus denominated, as being the *father*, or founder, of that new age or dispensation, which is to *endure as long as the sun and moon*; the *second Adam*, the father of that *seed* which *shall endure*

for ever. Thus we read of *the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*, 2 Pet. i. 11. According to either of these views, this character is strictly connected and properly agrees with that immediately added, *the Prince of Peace*. For *peace* is the sum of our salvation, and the comprehensive blessing of the Messiah's kingdom \*.

But if the passage must be applied in this way, our author consoles himself with the pleasing idea, that it shall be very little to the honour of his Master. "Besides," he says, "whatever powers and dignities are to be possessed by Christ, it is sufficiently insinuated in this place, that he does not hold them *independent* and *underived*; since he himself, and all the blessings that he bestows, are said to be *given*, that is, by God; and at the conclusion of the prophecy, in the next verse, it is said, that *the zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this*." Christ himself is indeed said to be *given*. As Mediator, he is the *gift of God*. But he is not *given* by the Father exclusively. He *gave himself for us*: and he gives himself to us in the Gospel. What a mournful abuse is it of this *unspeakable gift*, thence, to form such humiliating inferences concerning him!

However, though the Son himself is said to be *given*, how does our author prove, that "it is sufficiently intimated in this place that whatever powers and dignities are possessed by him—he does not hold them *independent* and *underived*?" He cannot establish this from what follows, *The zeal, &c.* For he has not yet proved, That the Son himself is not the *Lord of Hosts*. To confine this character to the Father, is to beg the question; a species of *proof* very common with Socinians. Here he is not supported by the ancient Jews. For the Chaldee Paraphrast renders this last expression, *This shall be done by the Word of the Lord of Hosts*.

But

\* Vid. Vitring. in loc,



But this remarkable passage is not yet sufficiently mangled. Our author must give it another stroke, a finishing one, that it may never again rise up as a witness against his system. "I would also observe," he says, and certainly it is worthy of observation, more than any thing that plodding critics have ever observed before, "that that part of the title on which the greatest stress has been laid, may be rendered *the mighty God my Father for ever*, or *the mighty God is my Father for ever*." But how will this correspond with what seems to be our author's favourite application of the passage,—to the Father himself? The plain language of such a plan of interpretation is, "Let the Scripture mean any thing, or nothing at all, if it do not hurt my system, or *favour the common doctrine of the Trinity*." Our author does not generally trouble himself with criticism. But when he happens to strike on this key, what a glorious discovery does he give of his philological talents! Your Leusdens and Lightfoots, your Vitringas and Lowths, never favoured the world with any thing like this. The luminous idea of a *patronymic* being here introduced, seems to have been reserved for him.

The later Jews have laboured much to wrest this passage out of the hands of Christians: but they never thought of this happy device. That learned Dutchman, who was at such pains to make the Old Testament a dead letter, wisely thought of reading the preceding words, *The Counsellor of the mighty God*, as applicable to Hezekiah. But he had not invention enough, to make any thing tolerable of those that follow. The Chaldee Paraphrast was so ignorant of the original, that he renders this expression, *The God of wonderful counsel*.

But the *steight*, the μεθοδεια, as the Apostle calls it (Eph. iv. 14.) in this new translation, lies wholly in the proper management of a small matter, indeed, of a mere *God*. As

the Hebrew word is *abi*, and not *ab*, our author boldly concludes that it signifies *my father*. It would be paying too small a compliment to the learned writer, to suppose that he did not know, that this is the ordinary form of the word, when it occurs, as here, in construction with another; of which there are many instances. Therefore, according to this mode of interpretation, instead of, “The same is *the* father,” we ought to read, “The same is *my* father of the children of Ammon unto this day,” Gen. xix. 38. Thus Moses must be understood as saying, Jabel “was *my* father of such as dwell in tents,” and Jubal “was *my* father of all such as handle the harp,” Gen. iv. 20, 21. We will also have “Kish *my* father of Saul,” 1 Sam. ix. 3. &c. &c. The substantive verb *is*, in our author’s version, is entirely a supplement of his own. His view is totally repugnant to the punctuation. *Abi* has a different vowel point, when it signifies *my father*. The accents are directly against it. Though these should be considered as of human invention, yet in the present case they prove, at least, that the Jews have never dreamed of such an interpretation as our author’s.

He says that this view “is exactly agreeable to many declarations of the Scripture concerning Christ, and his usual title of *the Son of God*; and that to this the angel, in his salutation of Mary, might probably allude, when he said, Luke i. 32. *He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest.*” Many things are agreeable to each other, which are not *exactly* so. When this is the case, there is no variation, either in substance, or in circumstances. Where language is thus spoken of, it is supposed that there is no difference even in terms. One would therefore expect, after our author’s assertion, that he would produce a few of many passages in which God is called *the Mighty God the Father of Christ*, or his *Father for ever*.



But if the learned gentleman discover a faint resemblance, favourable to his purpose, with him it is enough to constitute an *exact agreement*.

Even supposing that the angel alluded to this passage, instead of proving that these titles do not belong to Christ, it would afford a strong presumption that they do. For when he speaks of him as *the Son of the Highest*, it is certainly in a respect different from that in which he mentions *David as his father*. I shall only add, that were our author's mode of construction admitted, a Trinitarian might urge, with fully as much appearance of reason, that the name, *My Father for ever*, or *My everlasting Father*, denoted in what sense God is the Father of this Son, *viz.* by *eternal generation*.

Indeed, his eternal generation, and therefore his essential unity with the Father, was celebrated by the ancient Jews as the foundation of his mediatory trust. They believed that it was because the Father had *begotten* him, that he would *give him the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost ends of the earth for his possession*, Psal. ii. 7, 8. It was because his *goings forth* had been *from of old, from everlasting*, that they expected that he should *come forth*, in his temporal incarnation, *to be Ruler in Israel*, Mic. v. 2.

We are informed by our author, indeed, that this latter passage “ may be understood concerning the promises of “ God, in which the coming of Christ was signified to mankind from the beginning of the world ;” and that “ the “ Chaldee Paraphrast renders it, *whose Name was foretold “ of old \**.” But it is to no purpose to tell us how an expression *may be* understood, while no regard is paid to the scope and connexion, or to the ordinary sense of language ; and while no reasons are given in support of the interpretation. A lively fancy, when thus allowed to drive on

with loose reins, may make any thing even of the language of inspiration. The ingenious Bishop of Avranches imagined that he alone had discovered the true meaning of Isa. viii. 1. when he understood the command given to the prophet, to *write concerning Maherſhalalhaſbaz*, as respecting that parental act, over which the Holy Scripture, in its manner of expression, often draws the modest veil of metaphor\*.

Dr P. cannot produce a single instance of the word rendered *goings forth* †, being used to denote the work of God in promising or predicting future events. But its root ‡ is often used to signify a natural birth, or a literal origin. Thus, of Caſluhim it is said, *Out of whom came Philistim*, Gen. x. 14. *Naked*, says Job, *came I out of my mother's womb*, Job i. 21. In this sense it is used, 2 Kin. xx. 18. *Of thy sons that shall issue from thee*, &c. ||. When metaphorically used to denote the procession of words, the *going forth* is attributed to the words themselves, and not to the person speaking, or of whom they are spoken, as must be the case here, according to our author's view §.

But we need go no farther than the clause immediately preceding, where the root is used to express a real nativity; *Out of thee shall he come forth*. It is unnatural to suppose that the same word, radically viewed, is used in its ordinary sense in the first clause, and in another, in which it no where else occurs, in the second. Besides, by this interpretation, the antithesis evidently stated between a temporal and an eternal egress, is lost.

Dr P. mentions the sense given to these words, in the Chaldee paraphrase, as favourable to his view. But he has no claim to the benefit of it, in a single instance, when

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\* Demonstrat. Evangel. Prop. 7. sect. 15.

† צֵא

‡ מוֹצֵא

|| See also 2 Sam. vii. 12. 1 Chron. ii. 53. Isa. xi. 1. &c.

§ See Psal. lxxxix. 34. Jer. xvii. 16. xlv. 17.



he pays so little regard to its general testimony with respect to the Memra. However, though he is willing to wrest a weapon out of the hand of an adversary, it is to his own hurt. For the words of the paraphrase will not bear his translation. They do not signify, *Whose name was foretold of old*; but, *Whose name is spoken from eternity, from the days of the hidden age* \*. In this double expression respecting eternity, the Paraphrast indeed retains the very words of the original, only expressing them in the Chaldee manner.

Dr P.'s view labours under various insurmountable difficulties. The egress of a promise is not only a very different thing from that of a person; but a promise made "from the beginning of the world" can never be the same with a person *going forth from eternity*. The beginning of the world has always been considered by Christians as the beginning of time. But though before this there was nothing save eternity, time and eternity are two things as different as the mind of man can conceive. Both the words here used denote eternity. That rendered *from of old* †, is indeed sometimes used to denote a remote æra within the compass of time. But it often signifies eternity in the most proper sense. It is the attribute of God himself, Deut. xxxiii. 27. *The Eternal God is thy refuge*. It expresses his existence without beginning: *He that abideth of old*, Psal. lv. 19. It is the word used by Habakkuk, chap. i. 12. *Art thou not from everlasting?* We find it in the language of Wisdom, the eternity of which is acknowledged by our opponents, though they refuse its personality: *The Lord possessed me—BEFORE his works of old*. The priority claimed is evidently that of eternal existence. For it immediately follows; *I was set up from everlasting*, Prov. viii. 22, 23. In conformity to this, the language of Micah may be rendered,

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dered,

קדם. † שמיא אמיר מלקדמין מיומי עלמא: \*

dered, *Whose goings forth have been, from the beginning.*—not “of the world” indeed, but that beginning ascribed to Wisdom, of the same date with eternity, as the terms are synonymous; *I was set up from EVERLASTING, from the BEGINNING, or ever the earth was.* The other word\* rendered *from everlasting*, is derived from a verb which signifies *to hide*, as especially denoting duration of a hidden and unknown kind. Though used, in various places, in a limited sense, it most frequently signifies absolute eternity. It is the strongest expression employed in scripture to denote the eternity of God himself, Psal. xc. 2. If we can ever be certain that it is used in this sense, we must be so, when it is joined, as in the passage under consideration, with another word of the same meaning. Thus it occurs in the place already quoted, Prov. viii. 22, 23. with respect to the sense of which, as denoting eternity, there is no dispute. There it is connected with **עוֹלָם**. Because *days* are here joined with *eternity*, it is no presumption that we are to understand the language of time. For the same mode of speech is used by Wisdom, in the place referred to; *I was day by day his delight.*

But although the proof arising from the words themselves were less striking, there would be sufficient evidence from the context, that the person described had an existence prior to his nativity in Bethlehem. In the next words, he is pointed out as the Judge and Ruler of God’s people at the very time that this prophecy was delivered. For a judicial act is ascribed to him: *He will give them up*, ver. 3. The pronoun relates to him only, who is before denominated *the Judge of Israel*, who was to be *smitten with a rod upon the cheek*, ver. 1. and the *Ruler in Israel*, ver. 2; and who is mentioned, in the following part of this verse, in relation to

\* **עוֹלָם** *olam*. This would seem to be the origin of the Latin *olim*; especially as this resembles the Hebrew word in denoting, both the past, and the future.



to *his brethren*. They were to be *given up* to adversity, *till she who travailed brought forth*, that is, till the Messiah should *come forth out of Bethlehem-Ephratah*. The futurity of this great event is mentioned as the very reason of the continuance of their calamity: *Therefore will he give them up till, &c.* For God, would have his church to look forward to the incarnation of a Divine Person as the foundation of her hope; and to learn by experience what she had so long refused to learn by precept, that all her temporal deliverances, amidst deserved wrath, were only for the sake of *Immanuel*, had an immediate respect to his coming, and prefigured that spiritual salvation which he alone could give.

Thus, it was revealed to the Jewish church, that he who was then her *Judge* should, as a Kinsman-Redeemer, join *the remnant of his brethren*, even of the Gentile nations, *to the children of Israel*, ver. 4. that he should appear to them as a Divine Shepherd, who should *stand and feed them in the strength of the Lord, and in the majesty of the Name of the Lord his God*, ver. 5. as possessed of the essential dignity of the divine nature; and that it was this illustrious Person, *whose goings forth had been from of old, from everlasting*, who should give them reconciliation with God, and deliverance from all adversity. For it is added, ver. 6. *And this shall be the peace, when the Assyrians shall come into our land.*

In what sense we are to understand this character, appears from the testimony of God the Father: *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*, Matt. iii. 17. Our author will not pretend that Christ is called *the Son of God*, because of his miraculous conception. With as little propriety can it be said, that he receives this name because of the perfection of his obedience. For though his life was hitherto blameless, he was only entering on his proper trial,  
passing

passing from a life of retirement to his public ministry, engaging in various conflicts with temptation, and exposing himself to the malice of the world. It had not yet appeared how he would conduct himself in such trying circumstances. It is, therefore, entirely preposterous to suppose that he should receive this distinguishing character, before he had proved his title to it. According to this view, it ought to have been, *This will be my beloved Son, &c.* The very formation of the language implies that he is a Son, abstractly from the idea of the Father's love. Literally it is, *This is that my Son, that Beloved.* If we consider the first expression as merely signifying God's peculiar love to him, exclusive of the idea of a proper sonship, we charge the Divine Speaker with an unmeaning tautology.

It has been seen, that this character is not equivalent to that of *the Christ*; and the same will more fully appear in the course of this inquiry.

When this testimony was repeated at the transfiguration, it was with this important addition; *Hear ye him*, Matt. xvii. 5. It cannot be supposed as the design of the Divine Speaker, that Jesus should only have the same honour that his people had given to former messengers. For the Son is here opposed to all who had gone before him; who are represented in their different characters, by the two illustrious persons present. These words are, indeed, the Father's reply to the foolish proposal of the bewildered disciples, of making three tabernacles, and thus giving the same honour to Moses and Elias, as to Jesus. But they are commanded to *hear him*, as greater than Moses, the instrumental giver of the law, and as greater than Elias, who was called the restorer of it. Nor is the argument, enforcing this command, taken from the superiority of his doctrine and dispensation; but from the superior dignity of the Person, as being the Son of God essentially considered. The very  
word



word used to express the command, confirms this view. For it often occurs in scripture, as denoting the whole of that homage we owe to God, with respect to the revelation he hath given us : *Observe and hear all these words which I command thee*, Deut. xii. 28. *And the people said unto Joshua, The Lord our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey*, literally, *hear*, Josh. xxiv. 24. *If ye will not hear,—to give glory to my Name, I will even send a curse upon you*, Mal. ii. 2. *He that is of God, heareth God's words*, John viii. 47.

How this language was understood by holy Angels, appears from the address of Gabriel to the Virgin. *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee : therefore also that Holy Thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God*, Luke i. 35. Socinians have generally explained these words as signifying, that Jesus is the Son of God, because of his miraculous conception. But it is not said, that therefore he shall *be*, but only that he shall be *called*, the Son of God. Nor is he so *called*, as if he derived his sonship from his miraculous conception, but because this was a glorious manifestation of it. That this is the sense, is evident from the connexion. As these words are an answer to Mary's question, *How shall this be, seeing I know not a man ?* the Angel undoubtedly alludes to the prophecy of Isaiah ; *Behold, a Virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call his Name Immanuel*, chap. vii. 14. He informs Mary, that this *sign* should be fulfilled in her. “ Therefore,” he says, “ by this extraordinary circumstance, it shall be clearly “ manifested that he, who shall be born of thee, is indeed “ the Son of God, who has been so long promised to his “ Church in the character of a Divine Saviour \*.” Persons

\* Vid. Hoornbeck Socin. Confutat. Vol. ii. p. 37, 38. Bisterfield cont. Crell. p. 303.

sons and things are, in scripture, frequently said to be *called* by any particular designation, when it is simply meant, that it shall undoubtedly appear that they really *are* what the designation imports. Thus it is said, *He that is left in Zion—shall be called holy*; that is, he shall evidently appear to *be* holy. For this is to be accomplished, *When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughter of Zion*, Isa. iv. 3, 4. But we need go no farther than the prophecy to which the Angel refers. There it is said, *Thou shalt call his Name Immanuel*. Now, the meaning plainly is, that he, thus miraculously conceived, shall appear to be *God with us*. For Mary did not give him this name, nor did he ordinarily receive it from others. His miraculous conception was the primary evidence of his being *God MANIFEST in the flesh*, 1 Tim. iii. 16. It may be further observed, that that the particle *διο*, rendered *therefore*, does not necessarily point out the cause of Christ's filiation. For according to its frequent signification, it simply denotes the *consequence* of his miraculous conception.

It is remarkable, that the angel speaks of that which should be born of the Virgin, as a *Holy Thing*. This is not the language ordinarily used to denote a person. It evidently expresses his conviction that Mary should be the mother of Jesus, only *according to the flesh* or human nature, which had no subsistence by itself. Language of the same kind is employed by the angel who appeared to Joseph: *That which is conceived of her is of the Holy Ghost*, Matt. i. 20. When Gabriel says that *even, or also that Holy Thing* should be called *the Son of God*; he declares that, in consequence of its personal union to the divine nature, it should be evident that this name belonged to the whole Person of the Mediator. But the language at the same time clearly imports, that this name should by no means be wholly engrossed by the human nature.

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The angel undoubtedly knew that, in this instance, that which was to be *born of a woman* should be *clean* \*, because of the essential purity of the Person to which it was to be united. We may be assured, indeed, that he who was *in all things made like unto his brethren*, sin excepted, would have been assimilated to them in respect of his conception, had not his infinite holiness precluded the possibility of his becoming literally *the Son of man*. For thus he must have *born the image of the earthy*.

According to the judgment of many interpreters, both ancient and modern, by *the power of the Highest overshadowing* the virgin, we are to understand the second Person of the adorable Trinity as, by his own agency, *taking part of our nature* †. If this be the case, the angel gives the most satisfying reason why *even* this nature should not be excluded from the honour of the name under consideration, although properly belonging only to the Divine. For in consequence of this ineffable assumption, they are indissolubly united in one person. It deserves our attention, that, although the influences of the Spirit are sometimes denominated *power* ‡, this term is not used any where else as a personal designation of the Spirit himself. But as the second Person seems, in the Old Testament, to be designed *the arm of the Lord*, Isa. li. 9. liii. 1. which is a synonymous phrase; in the New, he is expressly said to be *the power of God*, 1 Cor. i. 24.

## C H A P. II.

*Of the Testimony of Devils, and of the Enemies of Christ.*

IT may not be improper to inquire, in what sense this designation was understood by fallen angels. Satan seems

\* Job xv. 14. xxv. 4. † Vid. Wolfii Cur. in loc. ‡ Luke xxiv. 49.

seems to have founded his temptation on that striking testimony given by the Father. And he lost no time in trying the claim that Jesus had to this character. For *then was Jesus led up of the spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the Devil*, Matt. iv. 1. Scarcely had that voice been uttered, *This is my beloved Son*, ere Jesus heard another, saying; *If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread*, ver. 3. The tempter evidently interpreted this designation as implying *creating* power, not merely in its effects, in the change of the very substance of things, but in the manner of operation; by a mere word of *command*. Whatever Socinians do, Satan seems to have understood this character, as denoting that the Person to whom it belonged was that *Word of JEHOVAH*, who *spake, and it was done*, who *commanded, and it stood fast*, Psal. xxxiii. 6. 9.

All the judicial power ascribed to Christ is considered by Socinians as the fruit of his obedience, and as conferred after his work was finished. But the devils themselves knew that, even in the days of his humiliation, he had power to torment them. The idea of this power they connect with his Sonship. Therefore Legion said; *What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?* Matt. viii. 29. This multitude of unclean spirits acknowledged his *absolute* authority over them and all creatures. *They besought him, that he would not command them to go out into the deep. They besought him, that he would suffer them to enter into the swine*, Luke viii. 31, 32. In this gospel they are made to address him as *Son of God most High*; and they evidently considered him as heir of all his Majesty and Power. It was because he was Lord of the whole earth, that he had a right to deprive the Gadarenes of their property, in granting the request of the hellish legion.

The devils were at times so overwhelmed with a sense  
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of his majesty, as practically to shew that they reckoned him a Son entitled to the same homage with his Father. For *unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God*, Mark iii. 11. We are informed, in the same Gospel, that Legion, *when he saw Jesus afar off, ran and worshipped him*, chap. v. 6. They acknowledged him to be a Son of the same nature with his Father. Therefore, they addressed him as *the Holy One of God*, Mark i. 24. Luke iv. 34. When they call him *the Holy One*, they acknowledge him to be supremely and essentially holy, as opposed to all creatures: For thus the essential holiness of the Divine Nature is often expressed in the Old Testament. When they call him *the Holy One of God*, they use an expression of the same import with the *the Son of God*; denoting our Saviour's relation to the first Person as his Father, a relation of so peculiar a kind, that it not only excludes every other from any claim to partnership, but implies the possession of all that holiness which is essential to the Father.

These proofs may be of use to others. But they must be lost on those who are confirmed in our author's sentiments. For he denies that our Saviour was really tempted by the Devil; and agrees with some modern infidels, in asserting that the Demoniacs were merely lunatics\*. All this is meant to persuade the world, that *there is neither angel nor spirit*.

The Enemies of Jesus understood his claim of Sonship in such a sense, as on this ground to accuse him of blasphemy. It was by no means their idea, that by simply calling God *his Father*, or himself *the Son of God*, he was guilty of this crime. For the Jews arrogated this honour to themselves upon very flight grounds: *We be not born of fornication;*

\* Institutes, vol. ii. p. 436.

*fornication ; we have one Father even God, John viii. 41.* They knew that to them *belonged the adoption.* But they were convinced that Jesus claimed this honour, in such a sense as necessarily bore that he was equal with God. And it was from the connexion of his discourse, that they learned his peculiar meaning. They persecuted, and sought to slay him, because he had healed a man on the sabbath-day, John v. 16. But his vindication provoked them a great deal more than the action itself. *Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work, ver. 17.* Dr P. views, or pretends to view, these words as an excuse for healing on the sabbath : “ By way of apology, he says, *My Father worketh hitherto*, that is, in the course of his providence on the sabbath, as well as on other days ; *and I work*, that is, on the sabbath-day also. Upon this the Pharisees are more enraged, *because he called God his Father, and because he made himself* (not equal with God, as we render it, but) *like unto God*, assuming so much of his prerogative, as to claim the privilege of working on the sabbath-day \*.”

This cannot with any propriety be called an *apology*. For it was an express vindication. But it could be neither, unless Jesus used the word *hitherto* as applying to his own work, in the same sense as to the Father's. God's working on the Sabbath could be no reason why a mere man should do so. Far less could such a reason be given by our Saviour. God's continuing thus to work could prove as little ; unless Jesus meant that his work was coeval with the Father's, as being the very same. Our Lord's argument evidently consists in this, that he had the same right to work on the Sabbath, as the Father, because he was equally a divine Person ; which appeared from the sameness of the date and duration of his operation. The whole force  
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\* Famil. Illustr. p. 24.



of the argument lies in the equality of the persons. Without this, it hath none. The Jews justly understood Jesus as declaring that, though the Father had rested on the Sabbath from his work of creation, he *hitherto, even until now, or to this hour*, as the expression is elsewhere rendered, (1 John ii. 9. 1 Cor. viii. 7.) on the Sabbath, as well as on other days, carried on his work of providence, in the preservation of his creatures; and also, that he wrought in conjunction with the Father; and had done so *hitherto*, from the foundation of the world.

The Doctor endeavours to draw off the attention of the reader from the true nature of our Saviour's claim, and from the true reason of the rage of the Pharisees. He reduces the former to a claim of mere resemblance; and he divides the latter into two distinct reasons. "The Pharisees were more enraged," he says, "*because he called God his Father, and because he made himself like unto God.*" There is a stroke of Socinian *priestcraft* here. The learned gentleman must know, that the Evangelist gives both these reasons as one: *Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God*, ver. 18. The last words may be viewed as their inference from what Jesus had said, as expressed in those immediately preceding. But to make a distinct reason of them, favours too much of the *cunning craftiness* of those who *lie in wait to deceive*. However, our author wishes in this manner to avert the force of Christ's calling God his Father, in that sense in which, according to the natural connexion of the words, the Jews evidently understood his language; and to make way for his new version of the word *ισοον*. He wishes it to appear, that Christ's calling God his Father, was not at all the reason of their concluding that he claimed even so much as *likeness* to him;

but that this was wholly founded on these words, *I work*. But if his claim of Sonship suggested no idea either of equality, or of resemblance, how is it mentioned as in any respect a reason of their rage? The Doctor, in his explanation, wisely passes over this reason. He also discovers great address in dividing the true reason. For as the Evangelist has left it, our author's new translation of *ἵσεν* must have appeared very awkwardly: "The Jews sought, &c. because he—said also that God was his Father, making himself *like* unto God."

But truth needs none of these arts. The reason why the Jews sought *the more* to kill him, as given by John, is simply this; because *he said that God was his own Father, making himself equal with God*. The thing that increased the rage of his enemies, was the manner in which he claimed this relation. For he did not merely call God his Father, or abstractly speak of his own work; but he spoke of his relation to God in such terms, and in so intimate a connexion with his work, as clearly to shew that he wished it to be considered as the same with God's, and that he called God his *proper* Father\*.

Had the Jews understood our Saviour as meaning that God was his Father merely in a metaphorical sense, they would not have quarrelled with him. For they asserted the same concerning themselves. But it is the very hinge of the accusation, that he called God his *proper* Father. This is so well known to be the native force of the word *ἴδιος*, that it scarcely requires particular illustration. This term is used more generally to denote property of any kind, as when it is said, John i. 11. *He came to his own, and his own received him not*. But more strictly, it signifies the closest degree of relation. Thus it intimates that Simon was the brother-german of Andrew, John i. 42. *He*  
*first*

\* Πατέρα ἰδίον ελεγε τον Θεον.



*first findeth his own brother Simon.* Every one is commanded to have *his own* wife, 1 Cor. vii. 2 \*. But neither could our Lord call God his *proper* Father, nor could the Jews understand his words in this sense, unless he meant that God was his *natural* Father. Socinians have never been able to produce a single instance of one being called the *proper* father of another, but as implying this idea. Till our author prove that proper and improper, literal and metaphorical, are the same, he cannot shew that this term, expressly used for the sake of distinction, denotes a relation of that very kind which it is meant to exclude. But as he who is a proper Son, is begotten of his Father; Jesus, being the proper Son of God, must of necessity be so begotten. This being the meaning of the word *ιδιον*, the ridiculousness of our author's subterfuge appears at first view; He "said also that God was *his proper* Father, making "himself *like* unto God."

That the Jews understood our Lord as claiming a natural relation, farther appears from their inference from his words. They could never conceive that he made himself *equal with God*, by calling himself his Son metaphorically, or by asserting that as God had continued in his work of providence from the beginning of the world, he had been still engaged in a work of a different kind, from the beginning of his ministry. The ancient disciples of Socinus granted that *ισον* signified equality; pretending that the Jews misunderstood our Saviour's meaning. Their successors, however, are become so much better acquainted with the Greek language, as to find that the word must be rendered *like*. But our author has not produced a single example of its being used in this sense. The attempt would have been vain. For in the New Testament, it invariably signifies *equality*: and it is constantly used by pro-

\* Vid. Lamps in John i. 42. Owen Vindic. Evang. p. 168.

same writers in the same sense. We need not trouble the reader with proofs of what cannot be denied; but shall submit the decision of this point to a judge whom our author cannot reasonably object to. This is no other than Dr P. himself. We have his judgment recorded in the same work, at no great distance from what we have quoted, when explaining Phil. ii. 5. “The proper rendering of “this text,” he says, “is, *Who being in the form of God, “did not think that being EQUAL to God, or a state of equality with God, was a thing to be seized.* This makes the “whole passage perfectly just and coherent, &c \*.” If it signify *equality* there, *a state of equality*; if, according to this view, the *whole* passage is *perfectly just*; let our author be kind enough to give us a reason, why it is not rightly translated in the passage under consideration.

But let us see how the Jews are soothed, after being so much enraged by a claim of mere *résemblance* to God. Indeed, the Doctor’s cure is as bad as his disease. He adds; “To shew them that he meant nothing arrogant in “what he said, and that this privilege was given him by “God, he immediately replies,—*The Son can do nothing of “himself, &c.*” If the Jews considered a claim of mere *likeness* to God as arrogant, our Lord’s reply could never *shew them* that it was not. For it did not avail to his enemies, on what he pretended to found his claim. The claim itself, however viewed, was the ground of their offence. They would readily believe that a man, who made such a claim, would devise some excuse for it. The Doctor ought to prove, else his chain is broken, that Jesus never pretended even likeness to God, as “assuming any part of his “prerogative.” But on the contrary, he grants that our Lord maintained his claim, such as it is represented.

What Dr P. intends, when he speaks of our Lord  
“ meaning

\* Famil. Illust. p. 39.



“meaning nothing arrogant,” I cannot well conceive. For he admits that he “assumed so much of God’s prerogative, “as to claim the privilege of working on the sabbath-day, “as well as God.” All the difference between him and the Jews, is that, according to him, this assumption was not by usurpation, but in consequence of a divine gift. But so tender is he of the character of Jesus, when there is no occasion for his services, that, in order to screen it, he supposes an absolute impossibility, *viz.* that God had given to a mere man so much of his prerogative, as to work on the sabbath-day, as well as himself. But if this be God’s *prerogative*, how can he, without *denying himself*, give it to a creature? An enthroned worm cannot part with what is called his prerogative, without virtually dethroning himself. But in order to avoid an acknowledgment of Christ’s essential dignity, our author makes him claim, as a creature, what God cannot give. He ascribes real *arrogance* to the lowly Jesus, in attempting, on his principles, to exculpate him from the appearance of it.

After all, he fails in his proof. He pretends that our Saviour “shews that he meant nothing arrogant.” To illustrate this, he was to prove that “the privilege of working on the sabbath-day was given to him by God.” Therefore he refers to ver. 19 *The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do; for whatsoever things he doth, these also doth the Son likewise.* But our Lord, instead of lowering his claim here, or shewing that the Jews understood it in too high a sense, advances it. Instead of proving a right merely to work on the sabbath, he asserts his right and power to do *all* the works of the Father, in the same manner with him; without uttering one word concerning the supposed gift of a privilege of working on sabbath. Our author adds, indeed: “He then proceeds “to represent all his extraordinary power as the gift of his “Father.

“Father.” The Doctor, doubtless, wishes it to appear that Jesus established the particular claim by a general proof. But he reduces the argument of Jesus to nothing, by making it prove too much. He was to prove that he was not chargeable with arrogance in asserting *likeness* to God, in working on sabbath, because God had given him this privilege. According to our author, he proves this, by “re-  
“presenting *all his* extraordinary power as the gift of his  
“Father.” But this is not a fair state of our Saviour’s proof. For he in fact declares his right to do *all* the works proper to the Father, in the same manner with him. Nay, he asserts his agency in the very same works. A strange apology, indeed, from the mouth of a *mere man*.

Thus, notwithstanding all that Dr P. advances, the Jews clearly understood Jesus as making himself *equal* with God, by claiming a sameness of operation, as proceeding from sameness of nature. The folly of pretending that they considered him as claiming *likeness* only, if any doubt yet remains, will instantly appear to any one who will take the trouble to compare the passage with what is said, chap. x. 33. where we have the same accusation renewed; *Thou, being a man, makest thyself God*. Indeed, in the passage which has been considered, we have not only the construction which the Jews put on our Saviour’s words; but the justness of it is admitted by the Evangelist. For he evidently relates it as matter of fact, that Jesus had not only *loosed* the sabbath, as the word properly means, but *called God his own Father, making himself equal with God*.

Had the Jews put an unjust sense on our Saviour’s words, it cannot be denied that it was indispensably incumbent on him to correct their mistake. If he left them in it, he did not do justice to his own character; he did not use proper means for the information, either of his enemies, or of his disciples; nay, he did not vindicate the essential honour of  
his



his Father. If they rejected him, because of a supposed declaration of equality with the Father, while he meant nothing of this nature ; the blame of this rejection lay on him. His silence must have been their excuse. Nor was this all. As on this very account, they sought to kill him, he did not properly regard the sixth precept of the law, by using all lawful means for the preservation of his own life. He also run a great risk of seeming to seal an impious falsehood with his blood. All these, it must be granted, would have been inconsistent with the character of the Messiah.

But our Lord, instead of shewing them that they put a false sense on his words, vindicates them according to the very sense in which they were understood by the Jews. He premises his vindication with a repetition of that very claim which was the ground of offence ; *The Son*. Then he particularly describes the nature and manner of his operation. *The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do, &c.* These words are quoted, indeed, by our author, as a proof that Jesus did not mean to claim equality with the Father. But it has been already proved that, whether they be understood of him as *the Son of God*, or as *Mediator*, they express a power of doing all the works proper to God \*. This undeniably appears from what is immediately added ; *For what things soever he (the Father) doth, these also doth the Son likewise*. One, merely an imitator of God, might be said to do somethings *like* unto him. But no man in his senses would assert that he could do *all*. However, Jesus does not say that he works *like* the Father. He ascribes the same *extent* to his operation,—*what things soever* ; whether they be works of creation, of providence, or of redemption. He claims equality, as to *manner*. *These also doth the Son* LIKEWISE. The last adverb, *ομοιως*, evidently differs in its meaning

\* See above, p. 235—240.

from *καὶ*, rendered *also*; as denoting that the Son works in the same manner as the Father. He displays the same divine Power, Majesty, and Sovereignty; as he shews in the following verses. But he does not merely claim the same extent and manner of operation. He asserts an absolute sameness of works; *THESE also doth the Son.*

If any further evidence be necessary; that the Jews understood our Lord of such a Sonship as implied an existence prior to his incarnation, will appear from their construction of his words, when he said, *Before Abraham was, I am*, John viii. 38, 39. They undoubtedly considered this as a renewal of his former claim. For *then took they up stones to cast at him.* It is evident, both from the words themselves, and from their connexion, that they as little mistook his meaning here. But this passage has been formerly explained.

The Jews renewed the charge of blasphemy, when our Lord said, *I and my Father are one*, John x. 30. From the connexion, it is evident that he made this declaration with respect to unity of essence. For he had immediately asserted unity of power. He had declared concerning his sheep, *I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand*, ver. 28. Then their security is further declared; *My Father, who gave them me, is greater than all, and none shall be able to pluck them out of my Father's hand*, ver. 29. Dr P. indeed, makes short work with this passage: "At the very time," we are told, "that our Lord says that he and the Father are one, and in the very sentence preceding it, he says that his Father is *greater than all*. But how can the Father be greater than all, if there was any other, who was so much *one* with him, as to be, in all respects, *equal* to him \*?" But we might easily retort the question, and leave

\* Appeal, p. 14.



leave matters on the same footing on either side. How could the Son be *one* with the Father, if the Father be *greater than all*, in the Socinian sense? For thus there cannot be any other who is *equal* to him, in any respect. We have certainly as good a right to understand the unity to the exclusion of the superiority supposed, as they have to understand the superiority asserted, to the exclusion of a proper unity.

But a candid reader will easily perceive that when Jesus, after asserting that the Father was *greater than all*, immediately adds, *I and my Father are one*, he does so, not merely as claiming the same power with his Father, in preserving his sheep, but as testifying, in the clearest manner, that he did not include himself among the *all* formerly mentioned. This expression evidently refers to those only who would attempt to *pluck them out of* the Father's hand. And who would imagine that Christ should be one of them? It would naturally occur to his hearers, that he asserted *unity* with the Father as to that very *greatness* of power ascribed to him in the preceding words. That declaration, *I and my Father are one*, is undoubtedly added as an exception with respect to himself, in the same sense with what is said, 1 Cor. xv. 27. The apostle having observed that *all things are put under him*, viz. Christ, adds, *It is manifest that he is excepted who did put all things under him*. In the same manner may it be said; when it is declared, that *the Father is greater than all*, it is manifest that he is excepted who is *one* with the Father, whose works are the same as the Father's, and who says of himself ver. 38. *The Father is in me, and I in him*.

But Dr P. explains this language in the following manner: "That is, we are one in design and interest \*." Even this view cannot be rationally admitted, without granting unity of essence. For the words certainly express perfect unity;

as |

\* Famil. Illustr p 23.

as immediately respecting the preservation of believers, which is a divine work. And how can it be supposed that the will of a mere creature, yet exposed to temptation, and *not free from a bias of passion, drawing contrary to duty*, as Socinians speak of our Lord in the days of his flesh, could be so perfectly conformed to that of the Creator, that they might be said to be *one*?

The Doctor adds, “ But whatever be the union between  
“ the Father and the Son, it is of such a kind that his dis-  
“ ciples are capable of it with respect to them both ; for  
“ in his prayer for his disciples, he says, John xvii. 20.—  
“ *That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I*  
“ *in thee, that they also may be one in us.—And the glory*  
“ *which thou gavest me, I have given them that they may be*  
“ *one, even as we are one,*” &c.

Socinians tell us, at times, that *as* does not denote equality, but resemblance. It is necessary, however, to forget this distinction here. For at all events this passage must be employed to destroy the force of another. But we find the particle *as* used a little before, ver. 18. *AS thou hast sent them into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.* Will they say that a mere man had the same power in sending the apostles, as the Supreme God in sending him ?

There seems to be a shuffle in that expression, “ His disciples are capable of it.” Should it be inquired, “ Are ordinary Christians advanced to as great nearness to God as Christ himself?” it might be replied ; “ All that has been said, is that they are *capable* of it, as possessing the same nature.” But our Lord does not declare what they are *capable* of, but what they shall all certainly attain. For he speaks of the certain effect of his work. Will our author then say, that all believers attain as perfect an union with the Father, as their Lord, “ whatever be the union”



between the Father and him? Do not Socinians grant that Jesus is so united to the Father, that all divine wisdom and power are in him? Is it true of believers, that God *giveth not the Spirit by measure unto them?* Have they *all power in heaven and in earth?* We are commanded to be *merciful as our Father in heaven is merciful.* Shall it therefore be inferred, that man is *capable of infinite mercy?*

The objection receives no support from these words: *And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them, &c.* For here our Lord speaks of that glory which the Father had given him in trust, to bestow on his apostles and other followers; especially that of the knowledge of his *name*, mentioned, ver. 6. and of his *word*, ver. 8. and of a divine mission, ver. 18.: But this glory he contrasts with what was properly his own, what he had with the Father before the foundation of the world, ver. 5. This he describes as incommunicable, as what could only be *beheld* by them; *That they may behold my glory*, ver. 24.

It may be difficult to shew how John xiv. 10. can be understood as immediately denoting unity, as to either design, or interest. To suppose that Jesus should say, “I am “ *in the Father in design, or in interest*; and the Father is “ *in me, in design, or in interest*,” is to suppose a mode of speaking unknown to Scripture, and unexampled in any language.

Our author, in his Notes on the Dialogue between Flekwick and a monk, observes, that the texts referred to by the former, in reply to an argument from Christ's claim of unity, “are sufficient to shew, that Christ and the Father “ might, with propriety and force, be said to be *one*, without understanding it to mean, that they were one God, “ or one being\*.” The texts are Acts iv. 32. “The “ multitude of them that believed, were of *one heart*, and “ of *one soul*.” Gal. iii. 28. “There is neither Jew nor “ Greek,

“Greek,—bond nor free,—male nor female: for ye are  
 “all *one* in Christ Jesus.” Eph. v. 31. “They two shall  
 “be *one flesh*.” But these passages only shew, that different persons may be said to be *one* in different respects. And who ever denied this? They prove nothing as to the point in hand. The first gives us a substantive joined with the adjective, which shews that the sense is limited to *affection*. The meaning of the second appears from the context, which shews that *one new man*, or *one body*, is meant. For this unity is opposed to difference with respect to *nation*, *rank*, or *sex*. When man and wife are said to be *one*, we are expressly informed of the meaning, by the addition of the word *flesh*. He must have very *carnal* ideas of divine things, who would call in the assistance of this text, to illustrate the union between the Father and the Son.

Believers may be said to be *one soul*, *one body*; and husband and wife to be *one flesh*. But none of these expressions can prove that the Father and Son are *not* one in essence. It is evident that when this term is used, its meaning is to be learned, either from the substantive joined with it, as limiting the unity in that respect particularly mentioned, or from the connection. But when the term itself is used substantively, it certainly intimates the most perfect and unlimited unity; especially if the context confirm this sense. If men are not strangers to *Reason*, they will exercise it in deducing the native conclusion from certain premises. In other words, they will be capable of *reasoning*; which is only the exertion of this faculty. But to tear an expression away from those most closely connected with it, and to conjoin it with others that have no greater affinity to an sameness of sound, shews, either a prodigious want of that power which is the source of reasoning, or the wilful perversion of it.

Nothing can be more clear, than that the idea which the context



context more immediately suggests, is that of unity as to power. It is well known that, in the language both of sacred and of profane writers, this is metaphorically represented by the *band*. Now, our Lord having used this term, with respect both to himself, and to the Father, and in both expressions having declared the security of his people, to shew that he did not claim more than what belonged to him, adds; *I and my Father are one*, that is, *one thing, one essence*. He gives this as the reason why he had spoken of his *band* or *power* as an equal security with that of the Father.

The very structure of the language, unless it denote sameness of essence, is unbecoming the most exalted creature. Was it deemed a proof of treasonable arrogance in the prime minister of an earthly sovereign, to preface his dispatches with *Ego et rex meus* \* ? And shall a mere man, because he is the servant of God, be permitted to say, *I and my Father*, without incurring the charge of treason against the Most High?

It is undeniable that, on this occasion, as well as on the former, the Jews were persuaded that Jesus claimed equality with the Father. For they not only threatened to stone him, but assigned his supposed blasphemy as the reason; urging, as a proof of this crime, that he had appropriated to himself the honours of deity. Nothing can be more clearly expressed: *For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy, and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God*, ver. 33. Now, the argument is the same as in the former case. If Jesus knew that even those who were the primary objects of his mission, *his own* to whom *he came*, understood his language as an express claim of deity, and did not use every mean to convince them of the contrary; either they believed nothing but what he declared, and therefore he is God in the proper sense of the term;

\* I and my king.

term ; or he could have <sup>no</sup> right to the character of Messiah. If the former be <sup>not</sup> true, the latter necessarily follows from the premises. For it cannot be denied that he knew this to be the construction which they put on his words. But if he knew that it was false, and did not endeavour to rectify their mistake, he did not act a faithful part, either to God, or to man. Let us inquire, then, if, when they charged him with *making himself God*, he refused or refuted the charge as a gross calumny ? For undoubtedly, this is the part that any honest and conscientious man would have acted, when falsely accused on a subject of such magnitude.

But he does not so much as give up with these terms, that gave them so much offence. This a good and wise man certainly would have done, had he used them only metaphorically, and had it been possible to express his meaning as clearly and justly without them. Had they mistaken him, the most natural reply was ; “ Ye cannot justly say that *I make myself God*, by declaring that *I and my Father are one*, when I have already informed you, that *my Father is greater than all*.” This would have been far more natural and convincing than an appeal to the inferior sense of the name *God*, as understood by Socinians ; and unspeakably preferable to a reference to his works as those of the Father, and as requiring their *faith* in his testimony, in that very respect in which, it is said, they mistook his meaning.

Our Lord, however, still calls God *his Father*, and himself *the Son of God*. He vindicates that truth, for declaring which they accused him of blasphemy. He proves that he is *the Son of God*, according to the construction of his adversaries, as being *God*, first, by an argument from the less to the greater. *If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken ; say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world,*  
Thou



*Thou blasphemest ; because I said, I am the Son of God*, ver. 35, 36. He refers to the rulers of Israel, who, in Psal. lxxxii. are called *gods*. He mentions it as a mark of their inferiority, that *the word of God came* to them. If this respect the word of revelation ; it *came* to them as bound by its authority, and limited in the exercise of that very office, in regard to which they were called *gods*, by the express command of God Supreme, whom they were to consult for direction, and whose orders they were to fulfil as his deputies. To them, in this point of view, he opposes himself as *sanctified and sent by the Father*. The sanctification meant is evidently something previous to his mission. He was thus sanctified, as from eternity set apart, in the council of peace, for the work of our redemption. He was *sent* as *sanctified*. Therefore, he existed before his incarnation. He was also sanctified, and sent by God as his *Father*. Therefore, he is not a Son in consequence of either his sanctification, or his mission. Both these phrases evidently refer to the greatness of the work entrusted to him, the same that he had already spoken of. He was consecrated and sent by the Father, that, in human nature, he might discharge that office, still appropriated to God, of being the *Shepherd of souls*, ver. 1.—28.

But it is highly probable, that our Lord here speaks of himself as the personal *Logos*. The whole of that revelation, formerly given to the church, proceeded from him in this character. In the Psalm referred to, he seems to be the immediate speaker. This view is most agreeable to the order and construction of the words. For the relative term, *ov*, translated *him whom*, seems naturally to refer to *ο λογος τς Θες* as its antecedent. Indeed, the words may be literally rendered, according to their order : *If he called them gods, to whom that Logos of God came, (and the scripture cannot be broken) whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, say ye, Thou blasphemest, because I said,*

*I am the Son of God?* I have observed only one instance of the relative in the accusative, as connected with λεγω, signifying *of whom*. It is in chap. viii. 54. But it does not, with equal propriety, bear the same sense here. For the accusation, as repeated by Christ, being expressed in the second person, it would have been more natural, had the dative been used; Say ye *to him*, *Thou blasphemest?* According to this view, we have a satisfactory reason for the circumstance, of *the Word of God coming* to these Judges, being singled out in preference to every other, by which their inferiority might have been expressed. In the Ethiopic version, to which great antiquity is ascribed, this sense is given to the passage: “If he called them gods, to whom God appeared, the Word of God was with them,” ὧς. This view increases the force of the argument: “If those are called gods, to whom the Logos came, as having authority over them, setting them apart to the office of judging, and giving them so distinguished a designation, merely as prefiguring his own character and work; (and what is typically declared in scripture must have its full completion in the Antitype :) when this very person comes to you in human nature, as set apart, and sent by the Father for accomplishing the divine work of saving sinners, do ye charge him with blasphemy, because he claims that sonship in a proper sense, which they could claim only in a metaphorical; and appropriates the *truth* of that deity, which was ascribed to them only, according to the *shadow*.”

Dr P., speaking of the inferior sense of the term *God*, as given to Moses, says: “There can be no danger of our mistaking the sense of such phrases as these; or if it were possible, our Lord himself has sufficiently guarded against any misconstruction of them when applied to himself, by the explanation he has given of them; informing us, that, if, in the language of scripture, *they are called gods*



“ *to whom the word of God came*, (though, in fact, they  
 “ were no other than mere men), he could not be guilty  
 “ of blasphemy in calling himself only *the Son of God* \*.”  
 This particle *only* evidently implies that, in Dr P.’s idea,  
 our Lord takes a lower title to himself than what was gi-  
 ven to rulers. But, on the contrary, he calls himself *the*  
*Son of God*, in contradistinction to all who, in an inferior  
 sense, were *called gods*, and *sons of the most High*; thus  
 expressing unity of essence with the Father. For he evi-  
 dently uses this language as equivalent to what he had for-  
 merly said, when he called God his Father, in so peculiar  
 a manner that the Jews understood him as claiming deity.  
 For, though he refutes the charge of blasphemy, he does  
 not refuse that he *made himself God*. He refutes the  
 charge, indeed, from a consideration which necessarily im-  
 plies his ineffable superiority to all creatures. It is evident,  
 that the Jews were fully satisfied that the filiation which he  
 claimed could, in no sense, belong to a creature. For they  
 found their accusation on the circumstance of his being  
*a man*, ver. 33. Our Lord does not merely vindicate his  
 claim, but proceeds to establish it in all the extent in which  
 it was understood by his enemies. He proves his unity of  
 essence with the Father from the sameness of his operation.

Before considering this proof, we may advert to what  
 our author adds concerning the former: “ Now,” he says,  
 “ if Christ had been conscious to himself that he was the  
 “ *true and very God*, and that it was of the utmost conse-  
 “ quence to mankind that they should regard him in that  
 “ light, this was certainly a proper time for him to have  
 “ declared himself, and not to have put his hearers off with  
 “ such an apology as this †.” Though Jesus had used the  
 very terms mentioned, Socinians would have devised some  
 plan for evading their force. For when he is expressly

called *the true God*, they boldly refuse that he is the subject spoken of. It was certainly most proper for our Lord to retain the same kind of language that he had formerly used. For, not only was this the foundation of the charge of blasphemy, and therefore understood by the Jews as containing a claim of deity; but it exhibited this claim in the most proper light. Had he simply declared that he was *the true God*, his malicious opponents would have inferred that he meant to dethrone the Father. But by retaining the idea of Sonship, he not only asserted his real deity, but his distinct personality. This more immediately belonged to his work of revealing the Father. Nor could he exhibit himself as one *sent*, without referring to another person as sending him. Indeed, the proof which he subjoined, from his works, was a more incontestible evidence of his claiming real deity, than any simple declaration could have been. For though the names of God had been given to mere men, it had never been supposed that any, who were thus dignified, could perform divine works.

As the former argument depended on testimony, he now refers to sensible evidence: *If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works; that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him*, ver. 37, 38. So far from shewing them that they mistook his meaning, or from denying that he was *the Son of God* in their sense of the expression, and *made himself God*; he proceeds to prove his unity of essence with the Father, from the sameness of his operation; and, on this ground, he requires their faith as to the unity declared. This is the very doctrine that he had formerly taught, when he said, ver. 30. *I and the Father are one*. This concluding appeal to his works, in the proof and vindication of that claim of unity with the Father, which was the foundation of the dispute, incontestably demonstrates that he did not mean unity  
of



of design, but of power. His enemies, instead of being convinced that they had mistaken his meaning, were so confirmed by what he had said, that they immediately *sought to take him*. But he, instead of shewing that they still misunderstood his language, as, had this been the case, he certainly ought to have done, *escaped out of their hand*, ver. 39.

. As the Jews had been so often enraged at Jesus, during his ministry, because he *made himself God*; as on this account they had frequently sought to put him to death; when his *hour was come*, his condemnation proceeded on this very ground. The council, notwithstanding various attempts, not having found false witnesses against him; the high priest, by virtue of that authority committed to him, in matters of great importance, especially when proof could be obtained in no other way, proceeded to administer an oath\*. The instituted form was that of adjuration; and the pannel was to answer *Amen*, as a token of his assent to the *oath and curse*. Accordingly, the high priest addressed Jesus in these words; *I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God?* Jesus replied, *Thou hast said*, Matt. xxvi. 63, 64. Thus, according to the Hebrew idiom, he declared that he was. It was only the solemnity of the oath that made him break silence. According to the law, when in this manner he *heard the voice of swearing*, he was bound to utter the truth, Lev. v. 1. On two former occasions, when accused of blasphemy, though an oath was not formally tendered, he, as *the Amen*, solemnly asserted the truth of his deity, in the very words required by the law of adjuration†. On this occasion, it appeared to the Sanhedrim, that they had all the evidence that was necessary.

B b 2

*The*

\* Num. v. 18.—22.

† John v. 19. viii. 58. Vid. Vitring. Obs. Sacr. lib. 3. c. i. sect. 5. 6.

*The high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy. What further need have we of witnesses? behold now, ye have heard his blasphemy. What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death, ver. 65. 67. They unanimously agreed in this verdict, Mark xiv. 64.*

Because the Jews connected these characters, *the Son of God*, and *the Christ*, Socinians pretend that nothing more is meant by the former, than by the latter; and that the Jews considered this title, *the Son of God*, as belonging to the Messiah, while they expected no other than a mere man. Let us hear Dr P. on this point: “The Jews called it “blasphemy to pretend to be the Christ; for when the “high priest solemnly adjured our Lord,—that he would “tell him *whether he was the Christ, the Son of God*, and “our Lord expressly replies that he was the Christ, *then the “high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blas- “phemy\*.”* Our Lord’s reply is the only thing offered as proof. But Dr P. gives it quite a different turn from what it has, as rehearsed by the plain Evangelist: “our Lord “expressly replies that he was the Christ.” One who did not consult the passage, would naturally suppose that our Saviour had replied to the first part of the question only; or, that he had *expressly* said, “I am the Christ.” But his answer, being a simple affirmative, applied to the last, equally with the first part of the question. Because the Doctor imagines that these terms, *the Christ*, and *the Son of God*, are synonymous, it is going rather too far to say, that “our Lord “*expressly* replies that he was *the Christ*.” But he is still bolder in another place. For he gives this as our Saviour’s *only* answer: “He confessed that he was the Christ *only*.” This we shall attend to afterwards.

From an impartial consideration of what is related in the gospel-history, and of the opinions of the Jews, as recorded in their own writings, it will clearly appear, that  
there

\* Famil. Illustr. p. 22.



there is not the least ground for what is asserted by Socinians, that with that people, the terms in question were synonymous, and that our Lord was condemned for claiming a character, which, in their apprehension, belonged to a mere man. Indeed, it does not appear that the Jews were accustomed, in speaking of a person invested with an office, to give him two denominations, in connexion, merely expressive of his official character. But it was very common with them to connect the name of the office with an appellation expressing the natural descent of the person. Of this we have many instances. We read of *Josiah, son of Ammon, king*, Jer. i. 1. of *Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, governor*; *Joshua, the son of Josedech, the high-priest*, Hag. i. 1. of *Joab, the son of Asaph, the record r*, 2 Kings xviii. 18. 37. Isa. xxxvi. 3. &c. &c.

The high priest evidently marks a distinction between these characters. He uses them, indeed, as both applicable to one person. But he evidently introduces the latter, as expressing a relation different from that expressed by the former: *Tell us, if thou be the Christ, the Son of God*. If he does not, is not the last expression a mere tautology? If he referred merely to office, was not the term *Christ* sufficient? Or would it not have been more natural to have added, *the Son of David*? For, undoubtedly, the Messiah, in his official character, was more generally known by this designation\*. Is it not highly unreasonable to suppose that, on this occasion, no idea of divinity was affixed to that character, *the Son of God*, when, as formerly used by our Saviour, it had been always understood by the Jews, as expressing a claim of equality with God? It is evident that the high priest, in his question, refers to the second Psalm. For there is no other passage, in which the two characters are conjoined. Was it unknown to him, to the great coun-

B b 3

cil,

\* Matt. ix. 27. xv. 22. xx. 30. 31. Mark. x. 47. 48. Luke xviii. 38, 39, &c. &c.

cil, or to the Jews in general, that, in this Psalm, the Son is exhibited as the object of that fear, faith and reliance which the scripture uniformly appropriates to God?

But our author endeavours to anticipate this objection to his theory: "If Christ," he says, "had not satisfied the Jews that he did not mean to make himself equal with God, would they not have produced it against him at his trial, when he was condemned as a blasphemer, because he confessed that he was the Christ only \*?" When was it that he thus *satisfied* them? Was it when *they took up stones to cast at him*? John viii. 59. Was it when they sought to take him, after explaining the sense in which he called God his Father? chap. x. 39. Does Dr P. really believe that the malicious enemies of Jesus, who sought false witnesses against him, were so candid that, though secretly *satisfied* that he did not lay claim to equality with God, they would not have taken advantage of his words, could they have found witnesses to agree in their testimony? But whence is our author assured that they did not produce this charge against Jesus? Does he know all the *things* that the *many false witnesses* uttered? Is he certain, that this is not one of the articles on which their witness did not agree together? It is plain, indeed, that this is the very point on which they wished to make him his own accuser. Thence it is highly probable, that they had previously in vain tried every other method of proving it. They unquestionably considered his declaration in the very same light in which his doctrine had formerly appeared. For they gave it the same name of *blasphemy*.

Dr P. elsewhere proposes another question, which shews how much he is at a loss for argument: "If the high priest expressed his horror by rending his cloaths, on Jesus avowing himself to be the Messiah, what would he have done if he had heard or suspected, that he had made  
" any

\* Observations added to Elwall's Trial. p. 20.



“any higher pretensions \*?” What more could he have done? It is questioned, if it was lawful for the high priest to rend his clothes on any occasion. Could he have devised a worse name than *blasphemy*; or thought of a more cruel or ignominious punishment than crucifixion?

The generality of the Jews, indeed, had lost all spiritual apprehensions of the work of the Messiah. Therefore, it cannot be supposed that they entertained just or consistent ideas concerning his filiation. But still their minds seem to have been embarrassed by the scriptural language that exhibited him as *the Son of God*. Of this we have already produced various proofs.

It may be further observed, that our Lord, when he made the solemn confession under consideration, at the same time claimed the honours of deity. For he said; *Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of Power, and coming in the clouds of heaven*, Matt. xxvi. 64. He claimed divine honour in a twofold respect; first, by declaring that he should *sit on the right hand of Power*. According to the Jews, sitting on the right hand of a Sovereign denoted communion in empire. *Power* was a term which they frequently used to denote God himself. Thence sitting at the right hand of Power, is the same as sitting at the right hand of God. But this implies communion in power and majesty. Therefore, the inspired writer to the Hebrews might justly urge the essential dignity of Jesus from this consideration: *But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand?* chap. i. 13.

That this implies communion in power, and therefore, unity of essence, is evident from the prophecy of Zechariah concerning the *Man whose name is the Branch*, chap. vi. 12, 13. to which our Lord might allude †. Also, in the Revelation, the throne of God and the Lamb is spoken of

\* Ear. Opin. vol. i. p. 26, 27.

† See above, 321, 322.

as one, chap. xxii. 3. That the Jews could affix no other meaning to the language of our Saviour, than what we have given, is evident from the history of the martyrdom of Stephen, Acts vii. 55.—57.

Jesus also claimed divine honour, when he said; *Ye shall see the Son of man—coming in the clouds of heaven.* These words most naturally refer to the final judgment. This kind of language was well-known to the Jews, as expressive of the Divine Presence and Majesty. It is often used in the New Testament concerning the Messiah; most probably in allusion to the manner in which God manifested himself of old, at the giving of the law. He said to Moses; *Lo I come to thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever,* Ex. xix. 9. He was pleased to fix on this as the token of his presence. Thence Solomon expresses himself in this manner, *The Lord said that he would dwell in the thick darkness,* 1 Kings viii. 12. Accordingly, we find that the appearance of the cloud was the sign of the descent of JEHOVAH, both in the desert, and in the land of promise, Ex. xxxiv. 5.; 1 Kings viii. 10. Its overshadowing the mercy-seat was the symbol of the perpetual presence of God, first in the tabernacle, and afterwards in the temple. And a striking symbol it was. For God's dominion over the clouds is an unquestionable evidence of his almighty power\*. Therefore it is said, *Ascribe ye strength unto God:—his strength is in the clouds,* Psal. lxviii. 34. When the law was given from Mount Sinai, the clouds were also used as instruments for the display of his incomprehensible Majesty. Thence Moses afterwards reminds the tribes, that when the Lord spake to them, *the mountain burnt with fire unto the midst of heaven, with darkness, clouds and thick darkness,* Deut. iv. 11. To this awful manifestation the Israelites might

\* Vid. Maimonid. More Nevochim, par. 1. cap. 79.



might afterwards refer; when in describing the descent of their God, they represent *his pavilion round about him as thick clouds of the skies*, Psal. xviii. 11. and speak of him as *riding on a cloud*, Isa. xix. 1. For this description is appropriated to God; and it denotes that he makes the clouds, either his covering, or his chariot, as it is expressed Psal. civ. 3. or both. Accordingly, the language of our Saviour may be understood with the same latitude. For while, according to Mark, he shall come *with* the clouds\*, chap. xiv. 62. the expression used by Matthew† may be rendered either *in* or *upon the clouds*; though the last is most literal. In the use of this language, our Lord evidently refers to those prophecies in which he is described as *coming with the clouds of heaven*, and as surrounded with *clouds and darkness*, Dan. vii. 13. Psal. xcvi. 2. The last of these passages indeed, is intimately connected with that command given to all the angels to *worship him*, ver. 7. It is inconceivable, that the meek and lowly Jesus should speak of himself, or that in both Testaments he should be described by the Spirit of inspiration, in language appropriated to the Divine Being; unless, in his coming as Messiah, he really came to his church as that *God* whom she had so long *waited for* in the character of a Saviour, Isa. xxv. 9. Therefore, when it is said that our Lord shall *come with clouds*, it denotes that, in his coming, he shall so display his glorious majesty, almighty power, and tremendous vengeance against his adversaries, as incontestably to prove that he is *God himself*.

It is universally admitted that, in the interpretation of scripture, when any thing is more compendiously expressed in one passage, it is to be understood according to the fuller account given in another. Therefore, we are to understand what is said by Matthew, concerning our Lord's trial before

\* Μετα των νεφελων.

† Επι των νεφελων.

before the Sanhedrim, according to the more circumstantial narrative of Luke. From the latter we learn, that what is thrown together by the two first Evangelists, was the subject of two distinct interrogations. It would appear that the first simply was, *Art thou the Christ?* Luke xxii. 67. To this Jesus replied, *If I tell you, you will not believe. And if I also ask you, you will not answer me.* However, as he acknowledged the obligation of the oath, he added; *Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of Power;* or, as these words are more fully expressed elsewhere, *Hereafter shall ye see, &c.* They could not but understand this as a declaration of his being the Messiah. For both ancient and modern Jews apply that character, *the Son of man*, and the passage in Daniel to which our Lord refers, to the Messiah \*. Although he acknowledged that he was *the Christ*, and appropriated to himself these honours which were foretold as belonging to him, they did not yet proceed to charge him with blasphemy. They consider all this merely as presumptive evidence, and wish for something more direct as to the full extent of his pretensions. Therefore, *then said they all, Art thou then the Son of God?* If they considered this expression as of the same meaning with the other, the question was absurd. For he had already acknowledged that he was *the Son of man*, that is, *the Christ*. But they seem to understand it very differently. For as soon as he acknowledged that he was *the Son of God*, they unanimously found him guilty of blasphemy. Thus, there seems to be no good reason to doubt that the Jews affixed an idea of dignity to this designation, which did not, in their apprehension, belong to either of the former.

There is something very singular in their change of the term. They do not say, *Art thou then the Christ*, or *the Son*

\* Zohar in Gen. Bemidbar, &c. See Gill on the place. Chizzouk Emounah, Par. i. cap. 41.



*Son of man?* which would have been most natural, had all the phrases been synonymous; but, *Art thou then the Son of God?* As he claimed such signal honours, they wished to know if he claimed them as a divine person.

If “the Jews called it blasphemy to pretend to be *the Christ*,” why did they never exhibit this charge against Jesus, when he claimed this character, without the other? Why did they ordain that those should be only *put out of the synagogue, who should confess that he was the Christ?* John ix. 22. Why did they not call such a confession *blasphemy?* Why did not the Scribes and Pharisees in this manner take advantage of Jesus calling himself *the Christ*, when he provoked their rage by exposing their wickedness? Mat. xxiii. 8. 10. Why did they not charge the apostles with this crime? For if it was blasphemy to pretend to be the Christ, it must have been blasphemy to acknowledge a pretender in this character.

If any additional evidence be reckoned necessary, we are supplied with it in the account given of our Lord’s arraignment at the bar of Pilate. The Jews, supposing, perhaps, that a heathen would pay no regard to a charge of blasphemy, accused Jesus of sedition, in saying that he was *himself Christ a king*. But Pilate acquitted him: *Ye have brought, he says, this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people: and behold, I, having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man, touching those things whereof ye accuse him*, Luke xxiii. 2. 14. This account corresponds with what we have in the Gospel of John, chap. xviii. 29.—40. But, in the following chapter, he adds what had been omitted by the other Evangelists. After Pilate, upon a second examination, had acquitted Jesus, his enemies found it necessary to disclose that accusation, on the ground of which they had themselves already condemned him. *We have a law, say they, and by our law he ought to die, because*

*because he made himself the Son of God*, chap. xix. 7. What impression did this new crimination make on the Roman Governor? *When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid.* Our Saviour's acknowledgment of his official character, as *king of the Jews*, (one of the well-known titles of the Messiah expected by that people), made little impression on him. He knew that Jesus called himself *Christ* or *Messiah*, Mat. xxvii. 17. 22. Luke xxiii. 2. But now he seems to Pilate to be accused as claiming a *personal* dignity, which he had not formerly heard of. That even this heathen understood the language of the Jews in this sense, is evident. For *Pilate went again into the judgment-seat*, and proposed a question plainly implying that, in his apprehension, these words, *he made himself the Son of God*, did not respect any pretended office, but his origin. He saith unto Jesus, *WHENCE art thou?*—*From thenceforth*, it is said, *Pilate sought to release him*, ver. 12. He had done so before. But now he renews his endeavours with far greater earnestness. And nothing overbalanced his fear, occasioned by this discovery, but the more immediate danger of being himself accused to Cæsar.

Now, to what law did the Jews refer, when they exhibited this new charge? Certainly, to that respecting blasphemy, Lev. xxiv. 10.—16. For their own language limits the reference;—*because he made himself the Son of God*. They plainly allude to the ground of his condemnation by their council. There is not the least evidence that the ancient Jews gave the name of blasphemy to false prophecy. They might charge a false prophet with blasphemy, if he uttered any thing of this nature. But they distinguished the crimes.

It has been seen that, when Jesus formerly declared that he was *the Son of God*, he was accused of blasphemy; and that he was thus accused, because he seemed to the Jews to  
make



*make himself God*, although, as they imagined, no more than *a man*, John x. 33. Now, as he was condemned by the Sanhedrim for this very claim, as on the same ground they urged his condemnation by Pilate; unless Dr P. can produce positive proof, that this expression, *the Son of God*, was latterly understood, by the enemies of Jesus, in a sense totally different from what they formerly put on it; and that, although the reason why they formerly charged him with blasphemy, was his *making himself God*, they had so strangely changed their ideas of this crime as to find him guilty of it, because he claimed an office merely *human*;—every impartial person must conclude that Jesus was condemned by the Jews, because he *said that God was his own Father, making himself equal with God*.

But although it were true that *the Son of God*, and *the Christ*, were synonymous expressions; as Jesus knew that the Jews had formerly, and even on different occasions, understood the first of these, when used by him, as implying a claim of supreme Deity, and that after all his explanations they persisted in their opinion; if, when under oath, and about to seal his testimony with his blood, he did not use every means for convincing them that he claimed nothing more than a human character, he did not do justice to himself, he did not act a faithful part, either to his enemies, or to his friends, nor did he guard his church against the dreadful crime of idolatry.

In a word, as it has been already seen that Jesus, when accused of blasphemy on this head, persisted in his claim of Sonship, in that very sense in which the Jews understood him, and proved that he was *the Son of God* from his doing the same works with the Father; if he be not *the Son of God* by nature, as being a divine Person, he was justly condemned as a blasphemer.

Before leaving this part of the subject, I may observe

that even the Centurion, who superintended the crucifixion of our Saviour, immediately upon his death expressed a full conviction of his being the Son of God. We are informed by Luke, indeed, that he said; *Certainly this was a righteous man*, chap. xxiii. 47. But we are not thence to conclude, that he meant, or that he said, nothing more than that Jesus was innocent of the crime for which he had been condemned. It must previously be proved, not only that *the Christ*, and *the Son of God*, are synonymous expressions; but that *the Son of God*, and *a righteous man*, are so too. For the Centurion said; *Truly this was the Son of God*, or as the words may be rendered, *This was truly the Son of God*, Matt. xxvii. 54. Matters being so ordered by the Spirit of inspiration, that what is not so fully recorded in one gospel, is to be learned from another; from a comparison of the different accounts of Matthew and Luke, it is most natural to conclude, that the Centurion at first expressed his persuasion of our Saviour's innocence; and then, perhaps in consequence of the reflections of *those that were with him*, declared his conviction of the divinity of the sufferer. The circumstances that induced him to this confession, were not such as could have been expected, although a mere man had suffered wrongfully. *The earthquake, and the things that were done*, viz. the preternatural darkness, the rending of the rocks, and opening of graves, are mentioned by Matthew. But the circumstance peculiarly marked, as making the strongest impression on the Centurion, is the proof which Jesus gave of his being in full strength in the very article of death. This officer, who most probably had seen many executions of the same kind, had always observed that the strength of the sufferer was gradually wasted, so that before expiring he was incapable of the least exertion. But when he saw that Jesus *so cried out*, that is, as previously expressed, *with a loud voice, and gave*



up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God, Mark xv. 39. As Jesus expired, while his natural strength was unabated, the Centurion seems to have concluded that his death was a voluntary act, and not the effect of his sufferings.

### C H A P. III.

#### *Of the Testimony of Jesus himself, concerning his Sonship.*

WE should now inquire, in what sense our Lord himself called God his Father, or claimed the relation of a Son. What belongs to this head has been in a great measure anticipated on the last. The gospel-history, however, affords various proofs of the meaning and extent of this claim, distinct from those already illustrated.

1. Jesus represents himself as a Son, and as beloved of the Father, *before his mission*. Thus, in the parable of the vineyard, he says; *Having yet therefore one Son, his well-beloved, he sent him also unto them*, Mark xii. 6. Parabolical history, indeed, does not, in all its circumstances, admit of a strict interpretation. But this is absolutely necessary with respect to those which constitute the proper subject of the parable. Now, as the subject of that referred to, is, the infinite love of God manifested to his ancient people, notwithstanding their continued unworthiness, in sending his Son to them; and the greatness of their guilt in rejecting him; unless it be understood that God had a Son, an only Son, who was the object of his love, and essentially his heir, before he was sent, there is not the least propriety in the parable. The distinction between him and the servants is lost. The great evidence of the love of the lord of the vineyard, in sending this *one son, his well-*

*well-beloved*, disappears. We can perceive no just reason for ascribing to God, after the manner of man, a rational ground of hope, that the husbandmen would *reverence* this last messenger, notwithstanding their rejection of all who preceded him. In a word, if the Son be not essentially superior to all the other messengers, that consideration, which the parable seems designed to point out, as constituting the great guilt of these husbandmen, and as exposing them to divine vengeance more than any thing they had formerly done, is found to be a mere illusion.

2. He reveals himself as a Son *incomprehensible* to all creatures. *No one knoweth the Son but the Father*, Mat. xi. 27. Did we consider these words as respecting the *degree* of knowledge, they would illustrate the imperfection of that of the most eminent saints. But they especially refer to the *kind* of knowledge. Paul, much as he knew of the love of Christ, declares that it *passeth knowledge*, Eph. iii. 19. Our Saviour's language also particularly denotes the incomprehensibleness of the object. Therefore it is thus expressed in Luke, *No one knoweth who the Son is, but the Father*, chap. x. 22. His essence is a mystery to every creature. His mode of subsistence, as the Son, is equally a mystery. Had he been merely Jesus the son of Mary, or had he been the son of Joseph, as many persuade themselves; would not his presumption have been unparalleled, in speaking in this manner?

3. Our Lord declares that he is a Son who perfectly *knows the nature* of the Father. *No one knoweth the Father, save the Son*, Mat. xi. 27. This may be viewed in connection with what is said, John i. 18. *No one hath seen God at any time: the only begotten—hath declared him, or, hath acted the part of an interpreter*. These expressions, as well as that already considered, respect, not merely the degree, but the very nature of the knowledge. The language



guage excludes all creatures, angels as well as men. They may have some imperfect ideas of the Father. But *οὐδεις* *no one*, no creature of any order, *hath seen God*. All others know him by reflection from his works, or by revelation. The Son alone knows him by intuition; being intimately acquainted with his nature, perfections, purposes and operations. Whatever just apprehensions we have of the Father, are from the Son: *No one knoweth the Father, save he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him*. Our Saviour's language does not merely deny a perfect knowledge of the Father, but any true knowledge of him, except in this way; especially as it is recorded by Luke, *No one knoweth who the Father is*, &c. chap. x. 22. We have the same declaration elsewhere; *Not that any one hath seen the Father, save he who is of God*, that is, by eternal generation, *he hath seen the Father*, John vi. 46. Our Lord does not merely assert, that he knows the Father in a way different from that of every other, but that he knows him as perfectly as he is known by the Father: *As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father*, John x. 15. In what manner soever the Father knows the Son, these words, as well as those formerly mentioned, necessarily imply that in the self-same manner the Son knows the Father. Otherwise our Lord hath expressed himself so as to expose his disciples to the most dangerous error. Indeed, this perfect knowledge of the Father is mentioned by Jesus as the foundation and evidence of his perfect knowledge of his sheep, ver. 14. How could he know who were the objects of the Father's eternal love, how could he distinguish them in all places whither they were scattered, and gather them in all their successive generations, especially as they constitute a *multitude which no man can number*, unless he perfectly knew the Father; or, in other words, unless his knowledge were infinite? If, then, Jesus declared that there was

so wide a difference between his knowledge and that of every other, that he knew the Father as perfectly as he was known by him ; he, in the most striking manner, exhibited himself as a Son partaking of the same divine nature.

4. Jesus claims the honour of being a Son who *doth all the works* of his Father. This we have already seen in general, when considering his reply to the charge of blasphemy. For he says ; *What things soever the Father doth, these also doth the Son likewise*, John v. 19. But though a general declaration of this would be a sufficient ground for faith, our Lord is pleased to descend to particulars. He proclaims his power to communicate life to the dead : *For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth*, ver. 21. Now, it is God who *quickeneth the dead*, Rom. iv. 17. *Unto God the Lord belong the issues from death*, Psal. lxxviii. 20. Jesus also claims the work of judgment. *For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son*, John v. 22. Whether we understand these words of the final judgment, which is evidently meant, ver. 27. or of the separation which he makes, by the gospel, of his sheep from the rest of the world ; the argument is the same. If Jesus be judge, either his sentence is definitive, or it is not. If definitive, he is the Supreme Judge, and therefore God. For he is undoubtedly supreme, from whose sentence there lies no appeal. If not ; *all judgment is not committed* to the Son. That is not true which Jesus hath said, *The Father judgeth no man*. For he must judge those who complain of error in the judgment of a creature. There must be two judges ; the one human, the other divine : whereas, the scripture uniformly speaks of one only. It also follows, that the *day of the Lord Jesus* is not *the last day*. Justice requires that there should be another trial.

But it cannot be said with any semblance of reason, that



a mere man acts as the delegate of God, in the work of judgment. He would be totally unfit for it. How could he know, not only all the words and actions, but all the thoughts of men? Although a mere man should be supposed to have a communicated knowledge of the heart; yet this being limited and gradual, as all communications to a creature must be, could not qualify him for being Judge of the world. For he who is so, must know all things at once, and be able, by one intuitive glance, certainly to distinguish the goats from the sheep. Socinians, therefore, while they ascribe all judgment to the Son, involuntarily ascribe deity to him. For what they grant necessarily supposes omniscience.

But indeed, God hath precluded himself, by his own word, from employing a mere creature, how well qualified soever he be supposed, in the work of judgment. *God is the judge*, Psal. lxxv. 7. *The dead, small and great, stand before God*, Rev. xx. 12. *God is judge himself*, Psal. 1. 6. Therefore, it cannot be said, that Jesus acts as a mere instrument. In this case, he would not deserve the name of Judge. But we have a decisive proof of the truth of what is asserted, from the end for which judgment is committed to him. It is, *that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father*, ver. 23. This language necessarily denotes all that honour which belongs to the Father; as may be afterwards demonstrated. But if so, how irrational is it to imagine that one should be employed merely as a deputy for this end! When men employ substitutes, is it not rather for maintaining their own honour? But if a prince should resign the whole exercise of judgment into the hands of another, with this express declaration that he was to have the same honour as himself, and that this was the very design of the resignation, would not every one justly infer, that it was his will that the other should be considered as his equal?

If these words be understood of that gracious distinction which our Lord makes, as to all whom the Father hath given him, by means of the Gospel; still they demonstrate his deity. For, as has been seen on the last proof, he alone is qualified for this work, who perfectly knows the purposes of the Father; and no one can thus know him, unless he be of the same essence.

The work accomplished in this separation, is itself divine. Thus Jesus describes it; *The hour—now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live, ver. 25.* The quickening of dead souls is meant; as it is elsewhere said, *You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins, Eph. ii. 1.* But this is as really the work of God as raising those who are literally dead: and the allusion evidently supposes this. It is God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, who shines in our hearts. The Gospel is employed as the mean. But of itself it is totally inadequate to the end. Indeed, it is committed to men for this very purpose, that the work may appear to be God's. *But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us, 2 Cor. iv. 6, 7.* When faith is wrought in the heart, it is by *an exceeding greatness of power*, which has no parallel, save that which God the Father wrought in Christ, when he raised him again from the dead, Eph. i. 19, 20. God appeals to this spiritual resurrection as a convincing proof of his infinite power: *Ye shall know that I am the Lord, or JEHOVAH, when I have opened your graves,—and shall put my Spirit in you, Ezek. xxxvii. 13, 14.* Now, Jesus assures us, that all this is effected by his voice. It gives life: and this life is communicated by him, not as an instrument, but as a primary agent. Therefore he adds, as the reason of his claiming this power: *For as the Father hath life in himself:*



*self: so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself,* ver. 26.

These words have been generally understood, as referring only to the deity of Christ, and as expressing what has been called *the communication of the divine essence* to him. But, in my apprehension, this language, as it has not the sanction of scripture, conveys an idea inconsistent with the general tenor of its doctrine. It seems very plain, that Jesus here speaks of himself immediately with respect to his mediatory character. Every where else, when language of this kind is used, it denotes dispensation. This gift is also mentioned in the closest connexion with that of judgment, which evidently respects him as Mediator. For it immediately follows; *And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man,* ver. 27

But whatever difference there may be in the immediate application of the words, they necessarily imply, that *the Son hath life* as really in himself as its fountain, and as completely in his power, *as the Father*. Whatever the phrase, *in himself*, signifies in the one case, it must signify in the other. The mode of expression gives no countenance to the absurd doctrine of a derived deity. For it is not said that the Father *hath given life to the Son, that he might have it in himself*; but that he hath *given* to the Son that he might *have life in himself*. The term *εδωκε* *given*, does not seem to refer to the *life* itself, but to the manner of *having* it. The Father hath conceded to the Son, that he should *have, hold, or possess* this life, in his whole person as Godman, and that in this character he should confer it on others. This could only be by an act of concession or dispensation. For, though the life itself essentially belongs to the Son, as to the divine nature, equally with the Father; yet he hath no right to hold this life in human nature, or sovereignly to dispense it in an inferior character,

without a grant on the part of the Father, to whom he hath voluntarily subjected himself.

What our Lord asserts is simply this, that the Father hath granted to him that, in a new relation, he should hold and communicate that life which properly belongs to him as the Son. It is vain for Socinians to pretend that Jesus here speaks of himself as *the Son of man* in their sense, that is, as a mere man. For this very grant necessarily supposes the supreme Deity of its object. Were Jesus a mere man he might *have life*. But with no propriety could it be said, that he had *life in himself*. Unless he were God as well as man, how could he have it *as the Father hath*?

5. It hath been already observed, that our Lord, in reasoning with the Jews, claims the same *manner* of working with the Father. This requires a little more attention. If *the Son quickeneth whom he will*, John v. 21. he hath this power, either by donation, or essentially. He cannot, as a mere creature, have this power by donation. For, to suppose that God would confer on a creature the power of acting sovereignly, would be to suppose that he renounced his own Deity. For a creature, vested with power to act entirely according to his own pleasure, would be no longer dependent and accountable; the idea of submission to the will of a superior being necessarily implied in that of dependence, and dependence being the foundation of responsibility. Therefore, a sovereign and independent creature, is a contradiction in terms. But if this right essentially belong to the Son, he is true God. For sovereignty is an unalienable prerogative of deity. *Our God hath done whatsoever he pleased;—saying, I will do all my pleasure*, Psal. cxv. 3. Isa. xlvi. 10. *None can stay his hand, or say unto him, What dost thou?* Dan. iv. 35. But if the Son be essentially distinct from the Father, he may say  
unto



unto him, *What dost thou?* For he is equally sovereign with the Father. He quickeneth *even so* as the Father doth. Therefore, we must either suppose the existence of two distinct independent principles, or grant that the Father and Son are essentially one.

Indeed, the Son quickens those only whom the Father hath given him, John xvii. 2. But this affords no proof that the will of the Son is not equally sovereign with that of the Father; but, on the contrary, shew: that it is, by demonstrating a perfect identity of will. For, as nothing in one part of scripture can disprove the truth of what is plainly taught in another; the one declaration is not to be viewed in opposition to the other, but both must be understood in their connection. If, therefore, *the Son quickeneth whom he will, even as* the Father; and at the same time quickeneth those only whom the Father wills to be quickened; the reason must be, that Father and Son have essentially one will. To say, that *the Son quickeneth whom he will*, because, as a creature, his will is perfectly subjected to that of God, would be to make the Holy Scripture a mere play of words. For in this case, it would have been shameless arrogance in a servant to have spoken of his own will. His language ought to have been; “As the Father quickeneth, “so the Son quickeneth whom *the Father* will.” Were a subject, because he implicitly obeyed his lord, to say that he did whatsoever himself pleased; especially if, in this respect, he should compare his own conduct with his; saying, “As “my lord taxes, condemns, and pardons, even so I tax, “condemn, and pardon whom I will;” would not his sovereign account him, either a madman, or a traitor?

6. Jesus exhibits himself as a Son entitled to the *same honour* with the Father *The Father hath committed all judgment to the Son: that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father*, John v. 22. 23. Socinians have

been greatly stumbled as to this point. They do not merely contradict each other : but there are various instances of the same writer contradicting himself. Socinus, and the most of his followers in Poland, maintained that the Son was to be worshipped, even as the Father. But the generality of their successors have denied this ; finding the impossibility of giving any plausible reply to the arguments of their opponents in proof of the deity of Christ, while themselves grant that he is entitled to the worship of God Supreme. Dr P. says of the text under consideration, that *even as* signifies *as well as* the Father ; adding, “ The same word is used where it can have no other sense, in “ John xvii. 23. *And hast loved them as thou hast loved me ;* “ that is, not in the same degree, but *likewise* \*.” But where is the proof that this particle can have no other sense ? Is our author’s assertion sufficient ? How can he, according to his principles, shew that the degree of the Father’s love to believers is not the same as of that to Jesus ? Certainly, this assertion is not in a state of the most perfect concord with what we have in the Illustration immediately preceding, that, “ whatever be the union between “ the Father and the Son, his disciples are capable of it “ with respect to them both.” But how *capable*, if prevented by an inferior degree of love on the part of God ? However, it rather favours of absurdity, to speak of degrees with respect to the love, or any perfection of the divine nature. All his love must be allowed to be infinite ; unless our author please to avail himself of a doctrine which Socinians have been long charged with, that this is more than can be asserted of God himself. But if any should choose to say, that Jesus does not *here* speak of the love of the Father to him as his eternal Son, but as Head of the Church, in which respect he and all the members are viewed as one Christ (1 Cor. xii. 12.) ; the Doctor could  
not

\* Famil Illustr. p. 24.



not consistently object to the explanation, or easily prove a difference as to the degree of love.

But, though it were admitted that *as* denotes *likeness* only, with respect to love, nothing more could be inferred, than that the word *καθως* does not *always* point out *equality*; which no one ever thought of asserting. When used as to subjects different in nature, it signifies resemblance only. But, with respect to those of the same nature, it denotes perfect equality. Now, it is evidently used in this sense here. For, as we have already proved, our Lord has previously asserted, in the strongest terms, his unity of essence with the Father, as manifested by unity of power and operation\*.

After quoting these words, *He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father who sent him*, the Doctor says; “ This very last clause sufficiently shews that the honour “ to which Christ is entitled is not on account of what he “ is, or has, *of himself*, but on account of what he derives “ from God, as his ambassador †.” This clause, indeed, proves that he has such a mission as does not derogate in the least from his essential dignity, that he comes vested with all the majesty of the divine nature. But it can never prove, that he derives his title to this honour from his mission. Were a sovereign to send his own son, the partner of his throne, on an embassy of peace to rebels, informing them that, if they did not honour the illustrious ambassador, they did not honour himself who sent him; it would be strange reasoning thence to infer, that the prince was entitled to no honour but what he derived from his character as an ambassador. This is, indeed, the amount of our author’s reasoning. But Jesus is not merely sent, but sent as a Son. The work assigned him is particularly described, not

\* Vid. Glassii Philol. lib. iii. t. 5. can. 27. p. 1010, 1011.

† Famil. Illustr. p. 24, 25.

not as the foundation, but as the evidence of that honour to which he is entitled. Did the Father mean that the Son should be honoured only in an inferior degree, he would assign him work suited to an inferior nature only; his performance of which would be no temptation to give that honour to the ambassador, which is supposed to belong to him alone who sends. But the work committed to the Son is proper to God only. It is his essential prerogative to quicken the dead, Rom. iv. 17. to judge the world, Psal. l. 6. to give eternal life, Psal. lxxviii. 20. If, therefore, it be the express design of the Father, in committing certain work to the Son, to be performed by him in our nature, that he be honoured, in consequence of it, according to the nature of the work, which is undoubtedly the plain meaning of our Saviour's language; if, at the same time, the Father send him to do the same kind of work with himself, and in the same manner, nay, the self-same work, ver. 19. 21.; we justly conclude, that it must be the will of the Father, that he should have the same kind and degree of honour.

Had Jesus meant to inform his hearers, that his mission was the only foundation of his title to honour, he certainly would have used these terms which were not liable to mistake, as evidently referring to his official character only. But as he retains that very language which had been understood by them with respect to essence, it clearly shews that he proclaimed this as the proper foundation of his title. By connecting his delegated with his essential character, and also with that of the Father, in these words, *He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father who hath SENT him*, he tacitly assigns the reason of his original dignity being denied; his humiliation being the great obstacle to the carnal mind. Thus, he also shews the great aggravation of the guilt of those who for this reason reject him.



him. For the work, for which he was sent, contains an illustrious proof of his supreme Deity; and the rejection of him as *a Son given*, is a denial, not only of the authority, but of the very essence of the Father, and therefore, of all true worship.

If the Son be not honoured as truly God; the *authority* of the Father is denied. For when he sent his Son, it was that he might be *reverenced* in this character; and that men, convinced by his divine works, might give him the same honour with the Father. The *essence* of the Father is also denied. For then only is he honoured as a Father, when it is acknowledged that, according to the preceding description, he hath a *proper* Son, who works in the same *manner*, with the same *extent* and *duration*, who indeed performs the very same works with himself. If, in all our professed adoration, we confess not this essential dignity, we do not worship the true God, but an idol. If we approach not to him by such a Son as our *way*, we cannot *come to the Father*.

Unless *all that honour* be meant, which belongs to the Father, we can see no good reason for his committing *all judgment* to the Son. A partial trust would have been abundantly sufficient for insuring an inferior degree of honour. But why does our author speak of *degree*? When he quotes John xvii. 23. and explains *καθως* as there signifying a different degree of love, it would appear to be his meaning that the term should have the same sense in the passage before us. If, therefore, the honour due to the Son differ from that of the Father, in degree only; the Son must be entitled to divine honour. But how shall this honour be denominated? Is it *λατρεία* or *δουλεία*?

However, as Dr P. elsewhere spends a section in endeavouring to prove that Jesus is not the object of prayer, it is most natural to suppose that he has quoted John xvii. 23. because

because he could discover no other way of avoiding the force of *καθως*. He could not explain it, as there used, of a love differing in *kind*, without acknowledging a difference of essence between Christ and his disciples. He applies it to the point in hand, either without observing, or without wishing that his reader should observe, the total change of the sense. For, if the title of Jesus be founded solely on his character as an ambassador, the honour must differ in *kind*. The one is the honour due to God; the other that due to a creature. If so, how is the same word used in so close a connexion, and even repeatedly? How has the spirit of inspiration left no antidote against idolatry? If the one honour essentially differ from the other, how is that which belongs to the Son to be defined?

As our author denies the worship of Jesus, he forsakes his predecessors as idolaters. Of Socinus he says, that “ he distinguished himself so much in discovering the original  
“ doctrine of the proper humanity of Christ, as to give occa-  
“ sion to all who now hold that doctrine to be called by his  
“ name \*.” But had it been in the power of that heresiarch to have given Dr P.’s character, it would not have been so favourable. He would have said; “ You have rightly judged  
“ that, in my estimation, it is very probable, that he who  
“ does not incline, or who does not dare, to pray to our Lord  
“ Jesus Christ, scarcely deserves the name of a Christian :  
“ with this difference however, that it is not *scarcely*, but  
“ that there is no room for this reserve; and that this does  
“ not appear to me merely *probable*, but that I am fully  
“ persuaded of it.” For these are his very words, when giving his judgment of one who should deny divine worship to Jesus †. The Racovian Catechism, composed by Smalcus,

\* Hist. of Corrupt. vol. i. p. 272.

† Recte igitur existimasti, mihi quoque verisimile videri, eum qui Dominum Iesum Christum invocare non vult, aut non audet, vix Christiani



cius, which may be considered as the confession of the Polish Socinians, exhibits the same judgment. “Q. What  
 “do you think of those who do not call upon Christ; nor  
 “think that he ought to be invoked? A. I reckon that  
 “they are not Christians, since in reality they have not  
 “Christ \*.” Nor were these vain words. For, when Francis David denied the worship of Christ, Socinus and his followers rejected him as a vile heretic; and carried matters so far, as to pay no regard to him while perishing in prison.

Thus, it appears that the belief of this article was, with them, not merely a term of communion, but of such importance that they accounted it a profanation of the Christian name, to give it to any who held the contrary. Here, then, is an event among professed Christians, at which heathens would have blushed. *Hath a nation changed their gods, which are yet no gods †?* But the Socinian church hath done so. Once, she worshipped a God by nature, and another by office. Now, she hath renounced the latter, acknowledging that this worship was idolatry. While vainly pretending that she alone holds the unity of God, she hath evidently lost her own.

7. Jesus reveals himself as a Son in so peculiar and exalted a sense, that the *glory* arising from the *works* proper to God, is common to him with the Father. Thus, when the disciples told him that Lazarus was sick, he replied; *This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified thereby*, John. xi. 4. It is the evident meaning of these words, that God had permitted this affliction for his own glory, and would  
 so.

tiani nomine dignum esse: nisi quod non modo vix, sed ne vix quidem, et non modo verisimile id mihi videtur, sed persuasissimum mihi est. Respons. ad Nemojevium, Ep. i.

\* De Præcept. Christi, cap. 1. ap. Owen's Vindic. p. 404.

† Jer. ii. 11.

so over-rule it, that this end should be gained by a striking display of divine power in the resurrection of Lazarus. But the mode of expression clearly declares that the glory of the Father, and of the Son, is one. Perhaps, it may be said, that our Saviour means to teach, that all the glory, which immediately redounded to him from his miraculous works, was designed ultimately to accrue to the Father; as it is pretended that he did these works merely by a delegated power. But the very structure of the words repels this objection. For then they ought to have been thus disposed; "This sickness is—for the glory of the Son of God, that God might be glorified thereby." Did a mere servant say, "I do this work for the glory of my master, that I may be glorified thereby," would not every one, who heard him, conclude, that he proposed his own glory as the proper and ultimate end of his work?

Thus it appears, that *the glory of God* is not assigned as the ultimate, but as the general end; and that *the glory of the Son of God* is not mentioned in subordination to the other, but as that end more especially in view. This is confirmed by the manner in which our Lord designs himself on this occasion. He seldom expressly calls himself *the Son of God*. But he does so here; as intimating that by his miraculous works, he was glorified as the Son of God, *powerfully declared* to be of the same essence with the Father; and also, that when thus glorified, God, essentially considered, was glorified, not ultimately and derivatively, but immediately and directly.

8. He reveals himself as a Son who is equally the object of *faith* with the Father. Thus he saith to Nicodemus; *He that believeth not is condemned already; because he hath not believed in the Name of the only begotten Son of God*, John iii. 18. The *Name* of Christ often signifies Christ himself, in the same manner as this language is used concerning



cerning God. As all the names of the Hebrews were significative, God, in addressing that people, very frequently adopts this phraseology, to denote that manifestation which he had made of himself, by particular designations, descriptive of his attributes or works. Therefore, *believing in the Name* of Christ, signifies faith in him, according to his revealed character. This is to be understood, sometimes more generally, and sometimes more particularly. When any special character of Jesus is mentioned, it is most natural to think that faith in his name is to be viewed as, in this instance, especially operating with respect to that character. Thus, when we read of *believing in the Name of the only begotten Son of God*, it naturally suggests the idea of faith in Christ, *as the Son of God, as a begotten Son, as only-begotten, and as of the same nature with the Father.* Unless particular expressions are to be understood with this particularity, it is vain to say, as almost every writer has done on the subject, that the Name of God or Christ respects the revealed character, or in other words, the scriptural designation of either.

Socinians endeavour to resist the force of this argument, by distinguishing between the primary, and the secondary, object of faith. They make the Father the primary object, as being the first and supreme cause of salvation; and the Son the secondary, as being only the instrumental cause. They assert that faith in the Father terminates in him as its ultimate cause; but that faith in the Son does not terminate in him, but by him is directed to God as its proper object; as it is said that *by him we believe in God that raised him up from the dead*, 1 Pet. i. 21 \*. We grant indeed, that faith immediately respects Jesus Christ as Mediator; and that it is by him as its author, and also as its glorious medium, that it terminates on God the Father. God, essentially considered, is originally the proper object

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\* Socin. cont. Viekl. cap. 4.

of faith. But the infinite moral distance between him and the sinner renders the intervention of a Mediator necessary. Otherwise, God, being *a consuming fire*, could never be the object of saving faith to any transgressor. It respects the Mediator as our *way*; not as if he were essentially inferior to the Father, but because he has become œconomically nearer to us; not because he is unworthy to be its supreme object, but because it could never reach this object without him. The very circumstance of his being the immediate object, is a certain proof of his being the object of faith in a proper sense. Faith could not respect Christ even as Mediator, did not his official character and work necessarily suppose deity. For it respects him, in this character, as revealing all that we can know concerning the nature, perfections, purposes and gracious operations of its ultimate object; and as claiming faith on the ground of his own testimony.

Even that faith which terminates on the Father, does not respect him exclusively, or as if he were the only divine person entitled to it. For it terminates on him, because he, under a federal character, sustains the honour of offended deity. This order of faith flows entirely from œconomy, and from mutual consent among the adorable persons; the mode of worship being regulated according to the mode of operation in the work of redemption. That very faith, which terminates on the Father in his federal character, as really respects the Son and Spirit essentially considered.

It has been observed in reply, that we can no more infer the deity of Christ from his being represented as the object of faith, than that of Moses, or of the prophets, from the same circumstance; as they, in an improper sense, are said to have been *believed*, Ex. xiv. 31. 2 Chron. xx. 20. Faith, as directed towards God, is undoubtedly the highest



act of worship; including a variety of inward and spiritual acts of the most exalted kind. If it appear that, in this view, it respects our Lord Jesus Christ, it must follow that he is its object in a sense totally different from that in which we are to understand what is said of Moses or the prophets.

But Jesus speaks of himself as the object which faith embraces, through the instrumentality of others, John xvii. 20. It must therefore, be absurd to suppose that he is himself a mere instrument. Neither Moses, nor the prophets, exhibited their testimony as the foundation of faith. They still referred to divine authority; prefacing their declarations with a *Thus saith the Lord*. But Jesus speaks in his own name, and requires faith in his testimony, on the ground of his own authority, John iv. 41. xiv. 11. Therefore, he ordinarily speaks with the greatest possible solemnity, in the first person; *Amen, Amen, I say unto you*. True faith, as we have seen, fixes on the very Name of the Son of God, as every way worthy to be its proper object. It is a subjection of the whole soul to him; a captivation of every thought to the obedience of Christ, 2 Cor. x. 5. a submission of our will to his, Psal. xlv. 5. cx. 3. an acknowledgment of his sovereign authority over conscience, Mat. xxviii. 20. and a recognizance of his right to supreme affection, Luke xiv. 26. Faith is a *fleeing for refuge* to him as *the hope set before us*, Heb. vi. 18. a firm persuasion of his *ability to save to the uttermost*, chap. vii. 25. and also of the sovereignty and sufficiency of his *grace* for this end, Acts xv. 11. 1 Tim. i. 14.—16. It is a *rest* of soul on him, Mat. xi. 28, 29. and an unbounded *confidence* in him, Eph. i. 12, 13. Mat. xii. 21. Faith respects Jesus as its *author* and *finisher*, Heb. xii. 1. as the very spring and support of spiritual life, Gal. ii. 20. and as the giver of eternal, John x. 28. It is a commitment of the soul to him,

Acts vii. 59. and this cannot be *in well-doing*; unless he be *a faithful Creator*, 1 Pet. iv. 19. In a word, it is a surrender of the whole person to him as his property, and a constant proposal of his glory as the supreme end, whether in life, or in death, 2 Cor. viii. 5. Rom. xiv. 8. Phil. i. 20. Let any man in his senses judge, if there be a creature, either in heaven, or in earth, worthy of such a faith?

9. Jesus reveals himself as a Son who hath the same *name*, and therefore the same essence, and a right to the same honour, with the Father. For he commands his apostles to *baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*, Mat. xxviii. 19. These words have been understood in a great variety of senses. But they can admit of no sense, that does not imply the deity of all the three Persons mentioned. Are they not all invoked in the ordinance of baptism? This, then, is a solemn act of worship, of which the Son is as directly the object as the Father. Does baptism denote a consecration or dedication of the person to Father, Son, and Spirit? And is not the person baptized as really devoted to the Son, as to the Father and Spirit? If not, the New Testament Church is so ill-regulated, that, even in her most solemn ordinances, there is no guard against idolatry. Is baptism a solemn initiation into a profession of faith in the Father, Son and Holy Ghost? And is there any thing in the command itself, or in the circumstances connected with it, containing the most distant insinuation, that the Son is not as properly the object of faith as the Father or Spirit? Is it his having the whole *power* of the godhead committed to him as Mediator? ver. 18. But if this be the case, is he not worthy of the same faith with the Father? Is it meant that *all nations* should be turned from the worship of them who *by nature are no gods*, to be made the disciples of a mere man? ver. 19. Is their faith to produce universal obedience? And is it,  
never-



nevertheless, faith in a man like themselves? Is the *presence* of a mere man all the encouragement of the servants of Jesus, in all their labours and sufferings? Or, can a mere man be present with them at all times, and in all places? ver. 20.

*Baptizing in*, or rather, *into the name of the Father, &c.* cannot signify the mere mention of these *designations* by which the adorable Persons are distinguished from each other. The *name* is evidently something in which they all agree. For it is spoken of as one \*. It is natural to think that, if our Lord had not meant to exhibit his essence as the same with that of the Father, he would have repeated these words, *into the name*. He observes this method, where there is unspeakably less danger of mistake. Declaring his work as Mediator, he says; *I will write upon him το ονομα, the name of my God, and το ονομα, the name of the city of my God*, Rev. iii. 12.

This manner of speaking, with respect to the divine essence, is not new. It perfectly agrees with the language of the Father under the Old Testament. When he promised to send an angel before his people, he said; *Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not: for he will not pardon your transgressions; for my name is in him*, Ex. xxiii. 20. 21. Had a mere delegation of authority been meant, it would have been more properly expressed, “He comes” or “acts in my Name,” or “My Name is on him.” But the language cannot with propriety convey any idea but that of identity of essence. It does not denote any thing external or adventitious, but something internal and essential. For it literally is, *My*

D d 2

Name

\* Baptizate gentes in Nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti. In Nomine dixit, non in Nominibus. Non ergo aliud nomen Patris, aliud nomen Filii, aliud nomen Spiritus Sancti, quam unus Deus. Ambros. de Sp. Sanct. lib. i. c. 4.

*Name is in his inward part.* Besides, these words contain a reason for what is declared immediately before ; *He will not pardon your transgressions.* Now, this declaration, in its connexion, leads us to the sense in which we are here to understand the *Name* of God. The divine perfection of justice is ascribed to this Angel ; and in this respect God's *Name* is said to be *in* him. The language evidently directs us to that solemn proclamation which JEHOVAH made of his *Name*, as *the Lord God,—who will by no means clear the guilty*, or as it may be read, *bold it, that is, sin, innocent*, chap. xxxiv. 5. 7. What was this but a proclamation of his nature ? When, therefore, he says of this Angel, *He will not pardon,—for my Name is in him*, he assures the Israelites that, although this glorious Person appeared as his Messenger, he was to be viewed by them in the same light with himself, as essentially possessing all that this name denotes ; and particularly, as that God *to whom vengeance belongeth*, Deut. xxxii. 35. Thus they were taught that every offence against this Angel was as heinous, as if immediately committed against the Father who sent him. Thus also, in these words we have, first, a reason assigned for the care to be exercised by the Israelites lest they should provoke this Angel : *For he will not pardon your transgressions* : and then, a declaration of the reason of his not pardoning ; *For my Name is IN him.*

In reply to the argument from the form of baptism enjoined by our Lord, it has been urged by Socinians, that Paul says of the Israelites that *they were all baptized into Moses*, 1 Cor. x. 2. But, in the same epistle, he proposes this question ; *Were ye baptized into the name of Paul ?* chap. i. 13. He evidently marks an important distinction between the two expressions. By comparing the command of Christ with the words of his apostle, it appears that the latter expression denotes a solemn profession of faith in the

Person



Person into whose name we are baptized, and of dependence upon him for salvation; especially as the Apostle joins this question with another, *Was Paul crucified for you?* At any rate, we know that the honour thus conferred on Moses was merely typical. For *the law was given in the hand of a Mediator*, Gal. iii. 19. Therefore, it might as well be said that the rock, whose waters supplied the Israelites, was equally honourable with Christ the antitype, and equally worthy of faith, as that Moses and Christ are equal in the other respect. For, because of the typical relation; the water is called *spiritual drink*; and it is said of *the rock* itself, that it *was Christ*, 1 Cor. x. 4. Were the Israelites *baptized into Moses*? Yet, even in this instance, he was considered merely as *a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after*, or as prefiguring him who is *a Son over his own house*, Heb. iii. 5, 6.

We may here attend to what Dr P. says with respect to the administration of this ordinance. He gives it as his opinion, that some of the ancient Unitarians baptized in the name of Christ only. “The form of baptism,” he says, “supposed to be prescribed in the Gospel of Matthew, “*viz. in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost*, and the *trine immersion* which was used along with “it, contributed very much to establish the doctrine of the “Trinity. It was natural enough, therefore, for the Unitarians to oppose this superstition by discontinuing the practice; though it is probable that the custom itself was an “innovation. That it was not in use from the beginning, “is pretty evident from their being no trace of it in the “New Testament, though we are not able to say at what “time it began \*.”—“The form of baptism,” he says, “*supposed to have been prescribed*.” And who can suppose any thing else, without virtually charging the Evan-

\* Ear. Opin. vol. iii p. 439.

gelist with inexcusable inaccuracy in his narrative? Perhaps, it would be doing less injustice to the inspired writer, to serve the conclusion of his Gospel in the same manner as the introduction,—by a vigorous effort to lop it off at once. One Unitarian, indeed, has given so clear a testimony to the force of the argument arising from this passage, as to venture a suspicion that it has been added from the apocryphal *Gospel according to the Egyptians* \*. As our author advances so boldly, it would not be at all surprising, though we were told in the course of a few years, that a very ancient manuscript had been found, which wanted the whole of this passage.

A man who brings down his Saviour to a level with himself, will at times shew that he pays more regard to his own judgment, than to his authority. The learned Gentleman will not admit that this was prescribed as a form, because “it contributed much to establish the doctrine of the Trinity.” But if Jesus prescribed a form tending to establish this doctrine, either he designed that it should do so, or that it should not. If the former; the doctrine must be true. If the latter; he did not sufficiently guard his church against idolatry.

Is it said, that it remains to be proved that this form was really prescribed? It must be acknowledged, that there may be considerable difficulty in *proving* this. For some things are so very evident, that it is not only an insult on human reason to attempt to prove them, but scarcely possible to do it; because they are more evident at first sight, than the most laboured proof can make them. It cannot well be doubted, that we have here a command. One thing that it respects is *teaching*, or *making disciples of all nations*. Dr P. can have no objection to this, if it be not understood in connexion with the doctrine of the Trinity. For  
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\* Anonym. ap. Sandium, p. 115. Wolfii Cur. Phil. in loc.



he hopes that, “in due time,” what he calls *true religion* will be received “by those who are ignorant of its nature, “whether living in Christian countries, or among Mahometans and Heathens \*.” But I wonder how he has classed Mahometans with Heathens; as the former are *witnesses* for the unity of God, and far nearer *true religion* than the Trinitarian Greeks who live *among* them.

The command also includes baptism. This seems to be enjoined, as that ordinance by which those who are *taught*, or *made disciples*, are openly received into the church: *Make disciples of all nations, baptizing them*. This, then, being the sign by which persons are admitted, it is natural to think that it has some definite form; and equally so, that the ordinance itself being enjoined, the form would not be omitted. These words, *In the name*, &c. immediately following the command respecting the ordinance itself, must either be *supposed* to express that form most agreeable to him who instituted the ordinance, and obligatory on all his followers; or we must conclude, that he left every one to follow the way of his own heart. Even Dr. P. will scarcely plead for the latter. We must, therefore, believe that this was the very form prescribed; especially as there is no prescription of any other.

But Dr. P. observes, that “we have no trace of this “practice in the New Testament.” But even supposing that this were true, it would be of as little weight, in opposition to an express command, as, in law, evidence merely negative, when opposed to that of a positive and direct nature. However, by the time that our author has got to the end of the chapter, matters are somewhat riper. For there we are informed, that “the apostles baptized in the “name of Christ only †.” That they baptized in the name of Christ is not denied. But to say that they baptized in his name *only*, is begging what ought to be proved.

D d 4

But

\* Dedic. to Hist. Cor. p. v.

† P. 444.

But the learned Gentleman is the most happy historian that ever lifted the pen. For facts grow to him like fruits to an husbandman. What, in the beginning of a chapter, peeps into sight, only as the feeble vernal shoot of a supposition, after advancing through the different stages of mere peradventure, of being probable, very probable, most probable, more than probable, almost certain, by the time he has got to the end of it, appears in the state of maturity, as an unquestionable fact. Whatsoever threatens to overwhelm it, whether scripture or reason, by the help of a new supposition or probability, it still keeps up its head; like the rice on the fertile banks of the Ganges, which, though the river has risen far above it at evening, is sure to be uppermost against morning. Although it hath been long a maxim, *Ex nihilo nihil fit*; it seems to be otherwise with our author. For, in his luxuriant soil, proof merely negative may be transformed into positive.

But let us inquire, if the apostles really baptized in the name of Jesus only. We cannot suppose that they did so, without previously supposing, either that they did not believe that our Saviour had prescribed a particular form; or, that they preferred one of their own to his. The former is incredible. For if there ever was a form prescribed by any master, we have one here. That to be observed in the celebration of the Lord's Supper is not more definite. Dr P. has virtually declared the only reason of his hesitation. Did it not "contribute very much to establish the doctrine of the Trinity," we should never have heard of the least difficulty about the institution. Shall we, therefore, suppose that the apostles preferred one of their own? But we cannot do so, without charging them with the most daring disobedience. If capable of it in this instance, surely, they were most unfit persons for fulfilling the order immediately connected with this form; which is, indeed,



indeed, merely a continuation of the same solemn charge ; *Teaching them to observe ALL things WHATSOEVER I have commanded you.* As the former injunction is immediately seconded by this, and such universality and strictness required ; can any rational person for a moment suppose, that the apostles would reckon themselves at liberty to neglect the observation of that very form which was so positively enforced ? Had they been possessed, indeed, by the presumptuous spirit of some modern apostles, that can make so free with the words of God, they might have been supposed capable of such conduct.\* But they had learned to deny themselves, as well as to follow Jesus. Before they pretended to teach others, themselves *became as little children.*

The language used, in the Acts, with respect to this ordinance, is that this or that person was *baptized in the name of the Lord, in the name of the Lord Jesus, or in the name of Jesus Christ.* This variety shews, that the inspired historian did not mean to mention the particular form observed in administering baptism, but only the fact with respect to the initiation of certain persons. It would appear totally unnecessary to Luke, particularly to specify a form known to every church member, when simply narrating the reception of converts.

Is it not often simply said that this or that person was *baptized*, without the mention of any divine name ? Shall we therefore infer, that the administrator mentioned none ? Or, shall we conclude, that the proper form of administering the Lord's Supper is by *breaking of bread* only, because the inspired historian, when speaking of it, makes no mention of *wine* \* ?

When it is said of any, that they were *baptized in, or into the name of the Lord*, it denotes that they were initiated into a profession of his name, declaring their faith in him

\* Acts ii. 42. 46. xx. 7.

him as a divine Saviour. Now, there was a peculiar propriety in mentioning their reception in this manner. For the most of those referred to were either Jews or proselytes: and the doctrine of salvation through that Jesus who was crucified, was their great stumbling block. Nor was it otherwise with the Gentiles.

Although this language does not express the form, it expresses the spirit and design of the ordinance. For as our Saviour is referred to in his mediatory character, there is a virtual reference to the whole Trinity, as engaged in our salvation, and as adored in this solemn act. For we know him as our *Lord Jesus Christ*, only as *the Son*, sent by *the Father*, to procure that spiritual baptism signified by the external rite; and as sending *the Holy Ghost* for this end. Therefore, when persons are said to be baptized in his name, he is never designed by his essential character, as *the Son*, but always by one derived from his mediatory function.

Indeed, independently of other evidence, we have a strong presumption with respect to the use of this form from the language of Paul to those disciples at Ephesus, who, when asked if they had received the Holy Ghost, informed him that they had not so much as *heard whether there was any Holy Ghost*, that is, any effusion; for John himself had assured them of the baptism of the Spirit. Paul replied; *Unto, or rather, Into what then were ye baptized?* Acts xix. 1.—3. The *εις τι* here seems plainly to refer to the words of institution, *εις το ονομα—της Αγιας Πνευματος*. It is just as if he had said, “Were ye not baptized in the name of the Holy Ghost; and how can ye be ignorant of his effusion.”

But although it were certain that the first disciples baptized in the name of Christ *only*, it could not serve the purpose of Socinians. For they administered this ordinance,



nance, as including a solemn act of worship, the object of which was Jesus. Therefore said Ananias to Saul; *Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord*, Acts xxii. 16. Now, *the Lord*, thus solemnly invoked as the object of worship, can be no other than he in whose name the convert was baptized: and this, it is granted, was *the Lord Jesus*.

Thus, our author, in his zeal against the Trinity, has evidently overshot the mark. For baptism being an act of worship, implying, not merely invocation, as expressed in the counsel of Ananias, but a solemn profession of faith in him who is *called upon*, and a dedication of the whole person to him; if the mode of expression used in the Acts, could afford any argument in favour of the worship of one person only, it would go wholly to prove that this person was our Lord Jesus. Dr P. therefore, in his pretended proof, has mistaken the person. For, if he has done any thing, he has proved that, in this instance, the apostles *worshipped Christ only*. However, all that can be justly inferred from the language of Luke is, that he considered *the name* of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost as *one*.

Our author's presumption must be astonishing to those who *tremble at the word* of God, when he adds; "It is to be hoped that the Unitarians of the present age will imitate their predecessors, by baptizing, as the apostles did, in the name of Christ only, without the *invocation* of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, or expressing what they apprehend to be the real meaning of that phraseology \*." For here he not only assumes what he has not proved, with respect to the apostles; but encourages others, either entirely to renounce the form prescribed by the King of Zion, or to make additions to it: as if it were dangerous to use our Saviour's words without our own explication. He avows his resolution either to *take away from the words of*

\* Ibid. p. 444.

*the book*, or to *add unto the things* contained in it: and he can be no stranger to the threatened consequence of either. What shall we think of his consistency in admitting that there is an act of *invocation*, that is, of *worship*, in baptism; even while proposing to make Jesus the only object of it?

On the whole, what estimate can we form of a Socinian faith, when we find that its subjects avowedly reject that very language of our Lord, which, according to their own acknowledgment, “contributes very much to the establishment of the doctrine of the Trinity,”—upon the slender ground of a pretended doubt, whether it was intended as the prescription of a form; while they cannot prove the contrary; and while the proof of the doctrine, arising from the words, is the same, whether it was thus intended, or not?

10. Our Lord declares that he is the *only-begotten Son* of God, John iii. 16. 18. This can bear no other meaning, than that he is a Son of the same nature with the Father. Other sons of God are said to be *begotten* of him improperly and metaphorically. But when Christ is called *only-begotten*, it implies that he is *the Son of God* exclusively, and therefore in the proper sense of the term, as denoting an eternal and incomprehensible generation in the divine essence. The connexion of our Lord’s discourse shews that identity of nature is meant. He assures us that he is *given* in this character; *God—gave his only begotten Son*, ver. 16. How ridiculous, then, to say, that he derives the designation from something posterior to this gift? In so important a light does he exhibit his filiation, that the rejection of him in this character appears as if it were the only cause of the condemnation of those who enjoy the Gospel: *He that believeth not is condemned already; because he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God*, ver. 18.

In



In this character does he reveal himself, as illustrating the right that he had to say to Nicodemus; *We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen*, ver. 11. As *the only-begotten*, he knew all that he testified by, perfect vision of the nature and purposes of the Father. He had already declared that he *came down from heaven*, ver. 13. and to shew that he was chargeable with no presumption in this declaration, he proclaims his eternal Sonship. When he speaks to Nicodemus of *telling him of heavenly things*, he at the same time informs him that he alone was qualified to do so, because of his descent from heaven. Having declared what must have appeared a paradox to this ruler, that *the Son of man*, even while he spake to him, was *in heaven*; he shews that this was true of that Person who appeared to the eye of sense merely as *the Son of man*, because he was also *the only-begotten Son of God*, ver. 13. 16. Nothing can be more evident, than that what our Lord says concerning God's *sending his Son into the world*, ver. 17. must be understood as signifying that he indeed *came down from heaven*, ver. 11. otherwise, the whole discourse is a mass of absurdity.

To the same purpose, the beloved disciple describes him as *the only-begotten who is in the bosom of the Father*, John i. 18. This denotes not only the infinite love of the Father to the Son, but unity of essence. There is an evident allusion to the love of a father to his own child: and thus Wisdom says, *I was by him, as one brought up*, Prov. viii. 30 \*. His being *in the bosom* of the Father is clearly mentioned as the evidence of his filiation. The allusion is undoubtedly to earthly things. Now, no one will say, that a man becomes a Father, by carrying a child in his bosom; but will reverse the matter, concluding, from this peculiar evidence of love, that the child is really his. Especially were it said, "There is the son in the bosom of the father;

"ther;

\* Vid. Lampe in loc.

“ther;” would any one doubt that the mode of expression presupposed paternity? According to the language of inspiration, the Son must, in the order of nature, be viewed as begotten, and the first person of the Trinity as a Father, before the former be considered as *in the bosom* of the latter. ‘The glory, therefore, that the disciples *beheld*, was that of *the only-begotten of the Father*, who had existed from eternity *with God*, being himself *God* \*. He is so begotten, as to be opposed to all the adopted sons of God; who derive all their *privilege* from him; by *believing in his Name*, as *the only-begotten Son of God* †.

Many are the cavils of Socinians against this sense of the expression; some asserting that Christ is called *the only-begotten*, because of his miraculous conception; others because of his resurrection; some confining it to the Father’s great love to him; and others, to that glory to which he is advanced as King of Zion. While one writer pleases himself with one of these views, another finds it necessary to class them altogether, that variety may, if possible, supply the want of solidity. But as Dr P. seems carefully to avoid giving any particular view of this appellation, it is unnecessary to trouble the reader with replies to objections, in which the Doctor may refuse that he has any concern.

#### C H A P. IV.

*Of the Faith of the Disciples concerning the Sonship of Jesus, during his Abode on Earth.*

WE are now to inquire, in what sense the disciples understood this character, while Jesus was with them as to his human nature.

The

\* Ver. 14. compared with ver. 1. † Chap. i. 12. 14. iii. 13.



The testimony given by Peter deserves our particular attention, as it expresses the faith of the twelve: *We believe, and are sure, that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God*, John vi. 69. He acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God in so peculiar a sense, that he essentially possesses all that life which belongs to the Father. For this confession must be viewed in connection with what the apostle had said immediately before; *Thou hast the words of eternal life*, ver. 68. He does not mean that Jesus merely declared the doctrine of eternal life, or gave such instructions as were necessary for attaining it; but that he had power to communicate this life by *the words* which he spake: For his language evidently reduplicates on the testimony which our Lord had given concerning himself, ver. 63. *The words that I speak unto you, they are—life*. How were they *life*? Because he that *believeth on the Son* hath *everlasting life*, ver. 47. or, as he expresses the same truth metaphorically; *He that eateth me, even he shall live by me*, ver. 57.

From the frequent connection of these terms, *the Christ*, and *the Son of God*, it has been urged that they are perfectly synonymous. But certainly, it would be far more natural to infer from this circumstance, that the latter denotes some peculiar excellency, which although supposed by the former, is not expressed by it. If they be synonymous, they are extremely ill disposed. For if that expression, *the Son of God*, in its highest sense be applicable to a creature; Peter ought to have said, “We are sure that thou art that Son of God, the Christ.” For according to the Socinian hypothesis, that character *the Son of God*, was far more general than the other, and more likely to be understood in the ordinary sense. The Jews often used it as applicable to every individual of their nation; whereas they confined the term *Christ* to those who were *anointed* to the office

office of priesthood or of royalty. However, as Peter expresses himself, it must appear to every candid reader, that he meant to define the sense affixed to the first character, *that Christ*, by the second, *that Son of God*.

He first declares that Jesus is the *Christ*, being convinced that he was that illustrious Person pointed out by the prophets as the Lord's *anointed* to the work of salvation. With this he conjoins his other character, because no one was to be the *anointed* of JEHOVAH, but he to whom he had said, *Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee*, Ps. ii. 2. 7. As he is denominated *that Christ*, to distinguish him from all the *anointed* prophets, priests and kings, who prefigured him: so *that Son*, to distinguish from believers, whom he makes sons by adoption; from all the Jews, who, because of their lawful descent from Abraham, said that God was their father, John viii. 41. and to whom, in a national respect, *belonged the adoption*; from angels, who, by creation, are the *sons of God*; and from those rulers who received this name in a typical sense.

If Peter meant only that Jesus was the Messiah, his confession did not surpass that of the carnal Jews, with whom our Saviour had the preceding discourse. For they said, *This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world*, ver. 14. As an evidence of their persuasion that he was the Messiah, they would have *come and taken him by force to make him a king*, ver. 15. Is it said, that they seem to have changed their ideas, when Christ more fully declared his doctrine? It is granted. But what doctrine gave them such offence? Was it not that of his divinity? Did they forsake him as unworthy to be acknowledged as the Messiah? It was on the very same ground on which pretended Unitarians would have proceeded. To these unbelieving Jews it was an *hard* and indigestible *saying*, that he *came down from heaven*. We are, indeed, to understand the



testimony of the twelve, in connexion with the tenor of the preceding discourse. It was a voluntary confession, arising from the design of our Saviour's doctrine: and it has no beauty nor propriety, unless viewed in this relation. When they declare their assurance that he was *that Christ, that Son of the living God*, it directly respects what Jesus had again and again testified concerning himself, that he was *that bread which came down from heaven*, ver. 32, 33. 50, 51. 58. and therefore the antitype of the manna; and without any metaphor, that *he came down from heaven*, ver. 38. and that he was there *before*, ver. 62. He who denies that this is the sense, while he means to sacrifice to reason, really makes a sacrifice of it.

This noble confession was again made by the same Apostle, in reply to that question, proposed by Jesus to his disciples; *Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?* Mat. xvi. 13. 16. The use of *τινα*, rendered *whom*, shews that Jesus inquires as to their opinion of his *Person* and essence. They evidently understand it thus. For, although their answer implies that Jesus was not generally supposed to be more than a prophet, it is evident that it does not especially respect the sentiments of the multitude with regard to his *office*, but their various ideas as to the specification of the *Person*: *Some say, John the Baptist, some Elias, and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets*, ver. 14. Then he demands their own sentiments: *But whom say ye that I am?* We cannot imagine that our Lord wished to know if they simply believed that he was the Messiah. His former words may be viewed, either, according to our version, as one question; or, according to the punctuation of some copies, as two; *Whom do men say that I am? The Son of man?* that is, "Is this what they say?" But which soever of these be preferred, it is evident that the disciples contrast this character, *the Son of God*, with that of Jesus con-

sidered merely as to his office. For it cannot be supposed, that they were at a loss to know, that the other designation, *the Son of man*, which Christ so frequently used, respected him, not merely as in human nature, but according to its application in their scriptures, as the Messiah in this nature. Had they viewed him as a mere man, they would have expressed this in their reply. For, as has been seen, the question itself required an answer respecting his nature, and they understood it in this light.

But they contrast this character, *the Son of God*, with that mentioned by himself, *the Son of man*; plainly declaring, that they ascribe to him a nature superior to the human. Our Lord evidently understands their confession in this sense. For, he replies; *Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven*, ver. 17. Here our Lord contrasts Peter's human origin as the *son of Jonas*, with his own as the *Son of God*. He refers to his carnal descent, in the words *flesh and blood*, in contradistinction to his own incomprehensible filiation expressed in what follows;---*my Father who is in heaven*. He declares the blessedness of Simon, in knowing so important a truth; especially as his natural descent could not be the source of such a persuasion as he had, but a gracious communication from the Father of Christ, who alone knoweth the Son, and therefore can alone reveal him. Jesus testifies such peculiar satisfaction with this confession, that on account of it, he gives Simon the surname of *Peter*; and in allusion to the meaning, as well as to the occasion of imposing this name, he subjoins this declaration with respect to the foundation of his church; *And on this rock will I build my church*; intending, either his own person, as Godman, or the doctrine concerning it, which seems to be elsewhere called *the pillar, and the ground of truth*, 1 Tim. iii. 15 \*.

Mark



Mark gives this confession in these words, *Thou art the Christ*, chap. viii. 29. and Luke, *The Christ of God*, chap. ix. 20. Thence Socinians contend that the other expression added by Matthew, is strictly synonymous. Were the argument their own, they would think it a sufficient answer to such an objection, that in some copies the word *υιος*, *son*, is found in Luke, and *the Son of God*, in Mark; and that the version of Ulphilas, to which great antiquity is ascribed, gives the confession as fully in Luke's Gospel \*, as we find it in Matthew.

But there is no necessity for claiming the aid of these variations. The term *Christ* supposes that the person to whom it belongs is *the Son of God*. Now, it seemed sufficient to Mark and Luke to give the substance of the confession; as they knew no other Christ than the only begotten Son of the Father. If Mark rehearses this confession more briefly than other two evangelists, he gives his own as fully as Peter had done. And he sets it at *the head of the book*, as an inscription expressive of the personal dignity of his subject; that every reader might know who it was to whom he gave the designation of *Christ* throughout the whole:—*The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God*, chap. i. 1. Considering the conciseness of his plan, the last expression must appear to Socinians an unaccountable tautology.

It is granted, that the term, *Son of God*, denotes the same person as *the Christ*. But must it necessarily follow, that it conveys precisely the same idea? One person was *the son of Jesse*, and *the king of Israel*. Will any one, therefore, conclude that these expressions were synonymous? Did not the one denote origin; and the other, office? One Evangelist gives the inscription on the cross, in these words, *Jesus the King of the Jews*; and another simply, *The King of the Jews*. Are we therefore to infer,

\* *Thū is Christus syrus Goth.*

that these expressions, *Jesus*, and *King of the Jews*, have exactly the same meaning? Undoubtedly, all that is intended, is to relate the substance of the inscription. And what good reason can be given, why this should not also be the case with respect to the confession of the disciples? By the words, “Thou art *that* Christ,” or “*that* Christ of God,” Mark and Luke express an acknowledgment of him, as that very anointed, who, in the Old Testament, was declared to be the *begotten Son* of God.

2. We may now attend to the confession of Nathanael, who, it is generally thought was the same person elsewhere called Bartholomew, one of the twelve. He said unto Jesus, *Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel*, John i. 49. He acknowledged him to be the Son of God, as possessing omniscience. For his conviction of our Saviour's claim to that character, arose from the display which he had made of this perfection in these words; *Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee*, ver. 48. What was the particular engagement of Nathanael, at the time and place referred to, does not appear. But his reply bespeaks the fullest assurance, that no eye saw him but that of omniscience. It is highly probable, that his religious exercise was itself of so peculiar a nature, that the very recollection of it struck his mind in the most forcible manner. Whatever it was, it seems, from the connexion of the passage, to have been a proof of the justness of that high character given him by Jesus; *Behold, an Israelite indeed!* The reply of Nathanael, also, shews a consciousness that his conduct on that occasion demonstrated the truth of the honourable testimony now given him.

From the question proposed by Nathanael in consequence of this testimony, it appears that at first he was at a loss to know how this stranger should be acquainted with his character.



rafter. Wishing to discover the source of his intelligence, he says ; *Whence knowest thou me ?* He was certain that it was not from personal intercourse. For he had never heretofore seen Jesus. Perhaps, he might for a moment suppose that it was by report. But as soon as our Lord replied, Nathanael was fully convinced of the omniscience of the speaker. Then he could safely apply to him the language of the Psalmist ; *Thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path, &c.* Psal. cxxxix. 2, &c.

The faith of Nathanael was not merely rational. It was supernatural. For he came to Jesus under the influence of a strong national prejudice. He despised him before he had seen him. *Can any good thing, he says, come out of Nazareth ?* ver. 46. As he did not once suppose that Jesus could know, by human means, what had passed *under the fig-tree* ; as he was also under the power of that prejudice already mentioned ; had not his faith been of divine operation, he would most probably, like many others, have ascribed the superior powers of Jesus to magic. But at once, all his objections are silenced, and he breaks out in this glorious confession ; *Thou art the Son of God.*

It is evident, that Nathanael uses this language as denoting a proper filiation. For Jesus mentions the proof which himself had given of divine knowledge as the immediate ground of this Israelite's faith : *Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig-tree, believest thou ?* ver. 50. Now, this was no otherwise a ground of Nathanael's faith in Christ, as Messiah, than as it was a clear demonstration of his deity. The faith of this good man did not operate as that of many other believers seems to have done. From the demonstrations of Jesus being the Messiah, they concluded that he was the Son of God ; ascending from the less to the greater. But Nathanael concludes, that he is the Messiah, from the satisfying evidence which he gave of

his being the Son of God, equal in perfection with the Father. In this very order are the articles of his confession disposed. Nor is his immediate confession of Jesus in this character, considering the ground of it, a contemptible proof that those, who *waited for the consolation of Israel*, expected a divine Saviour.

3. John, the harbinger of Jesus, gives him this character, as denoting his *eternal existence*, and his *power to confer the Holy Ghost*. *I saw*, he says, *and bare record, that this is the Son of God*, John i. 34. The sense in which he used this language, must be learned from what he had previously said, and from what he saw. He had said to his disciples; *After me cometh a man, who is preferred before me, for he was before me*, ver. 30. Whereas the Evangelist, in this chapter, calls the Baptist himself *ανθρωπος*, the term *ανηρ* is used to express the designation which he gave to Jesus. It seems to correspond to *שׁוֹרֵן* in Hebrew, which, it is well known, is frequently opposed to *דַּלִּי*; the one denoting an excellent or exalted person, and the other expressing meanness or infirmity. *Ανηρ* is also often used by profane writers, to denote strength, magnanimity, or excellence. Thus Homer,

Ανδρες εγε, φιλοι, μνησασθε δε θεριδος αληης. IL. Θ. 174.

Sometimes they expressly oppose *ανδρες* to *ανθρωποι*. *Ανδρες και εκ επι ανθρωποι μονον νομιζομενοι*. Xenoph. in Hieron. Thus it is also used by Herodotus; *Πολλοι ανθρωποι, ολιγοι δε ανδρες*, In Polymn. It occurs in the same sense in the New Testament, in its derivative *ανδριζεσθε*, *Quit yourselves like men*, 1 Cor. xvi. 13.

But what requires our particular attention is, that John expressly asserts the pre-existence of Jesus as the reason of his being preferred before him: *For he was before me*. In the manner of expression, we have that distinction which the



the evangelist still preserves between an eternal, and a limited, existence; expressing the former always by *νν*. For with respect to human nativity, John was indeed *before* Jesus. But this declaration has been already explained \*.

The harbinger calls his Lord *the Son of God*, in relation also to what he *saw*, as the emblem of personal dignity: *He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he who baptizeth with the Holy Ghost*, ver. 33. The visible descent of the Spirit, and his resting on Jesus, was to John the proof of his being that illustrious Person who had power to communicate the gifts and graces of the Spirit: and this power was to him so satisfying a proof of deity, that he immediately *bare record that this is the*, or more literally, *that Son of God*, ver. 34. He evidently refers to the testimony of the Father concerning him, *This is my beloved Son*; and perhaps to his own previous testimony with respect to priority of existence.

The Baptist could not mean merely to declare that Jesus was the *Christ*, or one *anointed*. The account which he gives of the character of that person in whom this sign was to be fulfilled, as this character was divinely expressed to him, and of his own inference from it, precludes this idea. For as the term *Christ* is passive, had Jesus been pointed out merely in this respect, the language ought to have been, *The same is he who is baptized*. It, indeed, belongs to the Messiah, as he is described in scripture, to *anoint* or *baptize with the Holy Ghost*. But this belongs to him, only as his office presupposes a character originally divine.

To these words, *with the Holy Ghost*, the Evangelists Matthew and Luke subjoin, *and with fire*, Mat. iii. 11. Luke iii. 16. While we have here a prediction of what

\* See above, p. 144.

should be the external symbol of the effusion of the Spirit on the disciples, (Acts ii. 3.), there is undoubtedly a reference to something, under the Old Testament, of a typical nature. Some apprehend, that there is an allusion to the cloud in which the Israelites are said to have been *baptized into Moses*. It was not only a *pillar of cloud* for refreshing them, but *of fire* for giving light, and as a pledge of the destruction of their enemies. Thus, it may be viewed as a striking figure of the operations of the Spirit, who not only refreshes the souls of all true Israelites, but consumes their spiritual foes \*. Others think that there is a reference to what was done, in vision, to the prophet Isaiah. His lips were touched with a live coal, as a token of the removal of his iniquity, chap. vi. 6, 7. †.

But to which soever of these the allusion is, the words contain a proof of the deity of the person to whom they apply. Is the pillar of cloud and fire referred to? Then, an Almighty agent is intended. *For I, saith JEHOVAH, will be unto her a wall of fire round about*, Zech. ii. 5. Is the symbol of Isaiah's purification alluded to? The inference is the same. For it is JEHOVAH who *washes away the filth of the daughter of Zion,—by the spirit of burning*, Isa. iv. 4. Our Lord is said to *baptize with fire*, which is of a most subtile and penetrating nature, to denote the divine energy and efficacy of his work on the heart.

Jesus is here exhibited as that Wisdom who had said to his church of old; *I will pour out my spirit unto you*, Prov. i. 23. as that JEHOVAH who had promised; *I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh*, Joel ii. 28. For the use of water in baptism is an emblem of this divine effusion: and the work is expressly ascribed to our Saviour, with the application of this very promise last mentioned; *He hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear*, Acts ii. 16, 17. 33.

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\* Vid. Lampe in Joan i. 33.

† See Owen on the Spirit, p. 54.



The work itself is a clear proof of his deity. It is to *baptize with, pour out, or shed forth the Holy Ghost*. Now, even according to the Socinian system, which exhibits the Spirit as merely the *virtue* or *power* of God, this work of effusion certainly far transcends the rank or power that can rationally be supposed to belong, on any account whatsoever, to a mere creature. The possessor must first have *an arm like God*, and be able to *thunder with a voice like him*. It is to suppose a far stranger mystery than that of the Trinity itself, to imagine a mere man capable of exercising all the power of God, and of dispensing all his gifts and graces, with all that unspeakable variety, and that unerring exactness which is requisite in the government of the church.

He who *baptizeth with the Holy Ghost*, dispenses his gifts and graces according to his own pleasure. Thence we read of *the measure of the gift of Christ*, Eph. iv. 7. *The Son quickeneth whom he will*, John v. 21. and therefore regulates all the means necessary for this end, in a sovereign manner. The Apostles ascribe the whole of their success to Jesus, and resolve the different degrees of it into the sovereignty of his will : *Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man ?* 1 Cor. iii. 5. The Holy Spirit is said to be *the Spirit of the Son*, Gal. iv. 6. The language used in the passage under consideration implies a constancy of power, and therefore, a sovereignty of operation. *The same is he who BAPTIZETH*. It is observed that this is the same as if it were said, “ This is the *baptizer* with the Holy Ghost.” But the same sovereignty is ascribed to the Spirit : *All these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will*, 1 Cor. xii. 11. Now, these things cannot be true, unless Jesus be really the Son of God, and so his will and that of the Spirit be essentially one.

In this very light does the Baptist contrast Jesus with himself, as displaying, in the clearest manner, his own unspeakable inferiority. The antithesis is more distinctly stated in Luke, (iii. 16.), *I indeed baptize you with water; but—he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.* John could only administer the ordinance of baptism unto repentance; as a symbolical confession of this, and as a mean and seal of divine institution. But Jesus, saith he, *shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, &c.* he shall really purify the inward man. But this is a work peculiar to God. It is God who purifieth the heart, Acts xv. 9. And he only can do so; for he alone knoweth it, ver. 8. The superior nature of this baptism is the proof that John gives of Jesus being mightier than himself.

It may be said, that “although John could baptize with water only, the Holy Ghost not being yet given, the honour ascribed to Jesus was conferred on his followers, who communicated the Spirit by the imposition of their hands.” But it is never once said of any servant of Christ, how eminent soever, that he *baptized with the Holy Ghost.* The disciples could pretend to nothing more than *baptizing in or into his name.* But it has been already proved that, in the communication of the Spirit, they were used merely as instruments\*.

The ascription of this spiritual baptism to Jesus is intimately connected with other characters of deity. For the Baptist immediately adds; *Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into his garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.* Mat. iii. 12. A real propriety in the church is here ascribed to Jesus. It is called *his floor.* But the church is *the house of the living God.* It is *God's husbandry.* These different expressions convey the same idea. Will any one say, then, that the church is as really the property of a mere

\* See above, p. 316, 317.



mere man, as of *the living God*?—Divine justice is represented as essential to Jesus. For it is not said that God's fan, or sieve, is in Christ's hand, but his own; *whose fan, &c.*—Omniscience is virtually ascribed to him. For he is said to perform a work which necessarily implies this perfection: *He shall thoroughly purge his floor.*—Believers are described as peculiarly his property; and how could this be, if he were not their God? They are *his wheat*.—Heaven itself is *his garner*, Luke iii. 17.—To him is the eternal punishment of the wicked, as well as the beatification of the righteous, ascribed: He will *gather his wheat—but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable*. But this work is the divine prerogative. *God himself is judge*. It is *our God*, before whom *a fire shall devour*, Psal. l. 3. 6. It is God, who shall *rain on the wicked fire and brimstone*, Psal. xi. 6. In *the hand of JEHOVAH* is that *cup*, of which *the wine is red*. He it is who *poureth out of the same*, Psal. lxxv. 8. There is only *one Lawgiver*, who is able to *save, and to destroy*, Jam. iv. 12. None but a divine Person could be fit for this awful work. Only the omniscient God could certainly discern between the chaff and the wheat. My God! I appeal from the judgment of a man like myself. By thy decision only will I stand. So small is the grain of *precious seed* in this heart, that, were I to be judged by the most discerning creature, he would be in danger of sweeping it away with the chaff.

4. The confession of Martha corresponds with those which we have already considered. She professed her faith in Jesus, as that Son of God who was himself *the Life*, and who could sovereignly communicate life to others. Before our Lord entered into discourse with her, she believed that, by his presence, he could have prevented the death of Lazarus. For this was her salutation; *Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died*, Johu xi. 21. She at the same

same time expresses her conviction of the constant efficacy of his intercession : *But I know, that even now whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee*, ver. 22. She seemed to confine her ideas of the power of Jesus to bodily presence, to divine donation, and to the prevalence of his prayers. Therefore, before he would give her any display of his power, he accounts it necessary to enlarge and elevate her ideas concerning it. In order to this, he declares his mediatory character, in such terms as necessarily imply his original and essential dignity : *I am the resurrection, and the life*. He also shews that faith is the mean of deriving life from him, and that he is himself the proper object of it : *He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live*, ver. 25. Then he declares the eternity of this life ; informing Martha that it is perpetuated by union to him, and by a constant life of faith in him : *And whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die*. In addition to this, not for his own information, but for her instruction, and for exciting her to the more vigorous exercise of faith, he proposes the following question ; *Believest thou this ?* ver. 26. She testifies her assent in these words, *Yea, Lord* ; acknowledging his dominion over her faith ; and also subjoining a more particular confession of it : *I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, who should come into the world*. She first declares her persuasion of the sovereign power of Jesus ; and then her faith with respect to, not only his official character, but his essential dignity and pre-existence. The connexion between the simple affirmative and the following confession, shews that, in her apprehension, believing in him, not merely as *the Christ*, but as *the Son of God*, was equivalent to a persuasion of his being *the fountain of life*,—and having power to communicate, and to continue it to eternity. Her faith rises in its exercise, and extends in its views, in consequence of the testimony of



of *the author and finisher of faith*. He gave her the most convincing evidence of the truth of what he testified, with respect to himself as *the resurrection and the life*, by a renewed communication of life to her soul. While he spoke, he shewed, by the operation of his Spirit, that his words were *spirit and life*.

If it did not appear to Jesus that Martha at first entertained ideas unworthy of his dignity, why did he exhibit himself in a superior point of view? But while she confined all his power to donation, did she not believe that he could obtain any thing from God by prayer? Did she not, therefore, think as highly of him as Socinians do? Is there one of them who believes that Jesus, in the proper sense of language, is *the Life*, as having it *in himself*, and as having a right to communicate it in a sovereign manner to others?

That Jesus performed the miracle recorded in this chapter, to confirm the faith of Martha and the rest of the disciples in himself as a divine Person, is evident, not only from what has been observed, but from the end which he expressly proposed in this work. It has been formerly seen, that he exhibited the glory of *the Son of God* as the supreme and ultimate end; saying to the twelve, *This sickness is—for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified thereby* \*. The Son of God was glorified, because it appeared in a very striking manner, by this miracle, that he is that *God who quickeneth the dead*, and who is the object of faith in this character, Rom. iv. 17. that he hath not merely power to give life, but that he is *the life*. This was *the glory of God* which Martha was to see, if she continued to believe; as our Lord reminds her, when her faith began to decline in its exercise, from a consideration of natural obstacles, ver. 40.

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\* See above, p. 413, 414.

5. The disciples confess their Master in this character, as expressive of his *power over nature*, and of his *right* to religious *worship*. On occasion of their deliverance from a storm, a cluster of miracles is presented to view. They see Jesus walking on the waters. At his word, Peter does the same. When Jesus enters into the ship, the wind ceases at once, though boisterous the moment before; and the ship, which was in the midst of the sea, is *immediately at the land whither they went*, Mat. xiv. 24—33. John vi. 21. Therefore, with one voice, they say unto him, *Truly thou art the Son of God*. It cannot reasonably be doubted, that they gave him this character, as signifying their persuasion that he was a divine Person. For all the concomitant circumstances shew, in the clearest manner, that they formed no other opinion. The disciples knew that God alone could suspend the laws of nature. They could not, indeed, be ignorant, that he had occasionally employed men as his instruments in this work. But they could never imagine that any man could communicate this power to another; and far less, that he could communicate it in an authoritative and absolute way. They had been witnesses, however, of Jesus doing so. While they hesitated whether it were he, whom they saw walking on the sea, or a spirit; Peter proposed this test of the truth of what his Master had said; *Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water*. He not only gives him a name, in its full sense, denoting universal dominion; but expresses his persuasion that Jesus could extend the same power, in its effects, to him also, and that he could accomplish this by a word. He craves, that this glorious operator would give forth his word of authority, saying, *Command me to come*. For the word *κελευω* always denotes authority, and sometimes that which is absolute and definitive. Thus it is used, Mat. xxvii. 64. with respect to the power of Pilate, the Roman Governor, over his



his soldiers ; *Command that the sepulchre be made sure.* In the same chapter in which we have an account of the miracles under consideration, it expresses the authority of Herod ; *He commanded the head of John to be given her,* ver. 9. It is evident that, as soon as Peter received the command from his Lord, he considered it as *the word of a king*, and as conveying *power*. For he *came down out of the ship*. His faith rested on the authoritative word of Jesus. Thus he gave him the honour that belongs to God only.

It was genuine faith. For it was the mean of his support on the watery element. *He walked on the water.* When he began to sink, Christ does not reprove him for trusting in the word of a man like himself; which he certainly would have done, had this been the case. But he charges him with trusting too little, and sharply reproves him for doubting. Now, what did Peter doubt? Unquestionably, the power of Christ's word of command. Therefore, our Saviour blames his disciple for doubting that, which it had been his sin to have trusted, had Jesus been a mere man. He reproves him for what, on this supposition, must have been his duty ; because it is written, *Cursed be the man that trusteth in man.*

Those who were in the ship acknowledged, in consequence of what they had seen, that Jesus was *truly the Son of God*. The word *αληθως*, rendered *truly*, often denotes the certainty of that evidence by which the truth of any thing is demonstrated. But it is also used to signify the truth of a thing itself, with respect to its essence. The latter seems to be the sense here. It is equivalent to their saying ; "Thou art the true," or "proper Son of God." They could have no other meaning. They not only witnessed the divine power of his word ; but expressly declared their conviction of this, by joining adoration with their confession. They were assured that God *alone treadeth upon the waves*

*waves of the sea, (Job ix. 8.). Therefore, they worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God. That the term used denotes religious worship, we have elsewhere proved*

It also appears that the man born blind, whom Jesus restored to sight, had such a faith in him as the Son of God, especially in consequence of having *the eyes of his understanding enlightened*, as to account him entitled to religious adoration. For when *Jesus said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God?* on the ground of Christ's testimony, that it was he who spoke to him, he replied; *Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him, John ix. 35—38.*

## C H A P. V.

*Of the Use of this Expression by the Apostles and others, after the Ascension of Jesus.*

**WE** are now to shew in what sense this character, *the Son of God*, was given to Jesus, after his ascension. He had promised to send the Holy Ghost, to *lead the disciples into all truth*. He was accordingly shed forth on the day of Pentecost. It is of importance to observe the consequence of this effusion. For we are under a necessity of believing, that any former mistakes would henceforth be rectified, and that what they understood imperfectly would be clearly revealed. But, instead of affording any evidence that they had formerly understood the term under consideration in too high a sense, they confirm that very sense in which it has been explained, both in their discourses, and in their writings.

1. That they used it in a different sense from that of either of these expressions, *Jesus and Christ*, has been already proved

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ved from the subject of Paul's preaching, Acts ix. 20. and from the Eunuch's confession, chap. viii. 37.

2. They ascribe to our Lord a sonship entirely different from that of *adoption*. *God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,—that we might receive the adoption of sons*, Gal. iv. 4, 5. According to Socinians, this ought to have been ; “ God adopted one, as a Son, to “ whom he had no essential relation, that we might receive “ the same privilege.” For it seems to be now the general doctrine of these writers, that Jesus receives this designation in the same respect as all believers, only with some little difference as to the degree of honour. They agree that it is as really adoption with respect to Christ, as with respect to Christians. For they do not apprehend that, by nature, they are more alienated from God, than he was. But they oppose the inspired Apostle. For while he ascribes the privilege of adoption, as conferred on those who were morally alienated, to the work of redemption as its immediate cause ; he traces it up to the love of God in sending a *Son*, nay, to the dignity of the person sent, as being *his* Son. If there be any propriety in the Apostle's language, Jesus was the Son of God, before he performed any part of that work, by which, according to Socinians, he entitled himself to this dignity. He was not merely the Son of God, after he had obeyed, or in obeying the law ; but as *sent forth*, as assuming our nature, as submitting to the law. The honour of sonship, to be procured for others, is evidently connected with a dignity (to which it bore some resemblance) proper to the glorious agent, before he entered on the work of purchase. Did not this character, as applied to Jesus, denote a state of existence essentially superior to human birth and legal subjection, there would be something ridiculous in the language here used. Whatever Socinians may make of that phrase, *made of a woman*,

it must be hard for them to shew that God could have a Son, who should be a mere creature, and yet *above* the law.

3. Jesus is exhibited as the Son of God, in a sense superior to that in which he is the *Son of David*. This appears from the question which he proposed to the Pharisees; *What think ye of Christ? whose son is he?* When they answered, *Of David*, he immediately replies, *How then doth David in spirit call him Lord?—If David call him Lord, how is he his Son?* Mat. xxii. 41.—45. The full design of this question we learn from an Apostle of Jesus Christ. It was undoubtedly meant to express this important doctrine, that, although *made of the seed of David according to the flesh*, he was also *the Son of God according to the spirit of holiness*, or his divine nature, Rom. i. 3, 4. Is there not a contrast evidently stated here? And where can it lie, if it be not between the human, and the divine nature of Christ? If he be called *the Son of David*, to which the Apostle's language is equivalent, *according to the flesh*; unquestionably, he is not called *the Son of God* in the same respect. If the former character engrosses all that pertains to his *flesh*, or human nature; the latter must refer to something entirely different.

Socinians reply, that the word in this passage rendered *declared*, signifies *constituted*. But this sense of *ορισθευτος* would destroy the antithesis evidently stated between *the flesh* and *the spirit of holiness*. It is confidently asserted that *ορίζω* is never used, either in the New Testament or elsewhere, as signifying to *declare*. But the contrary may easily be evinced. It seems most natural to understand it in this sense, Acts xvii. 31. *He hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath declared, &c.* The context requires this view. For with those times of ignorance which God winked at,



at, the Apostle contrasts that, in which he speaks, as a time of far greater light. He proves that it is so, from this very circumstance of God *declaring* or *manifesting* Jesus Christ, by his resurrection, as qualified for the work of judging the world. It seems also to be used in this sense, ver. 26. *He hath determined the times before appointed*. If we do not understand it of *declaring*, the language is tautological.

It is considerably in favour of this as the meaning, that, in the Old Testament, God so frequently appeals to this power of *declaring* future events, as a proof of his deity, in opposition to the idols of the heathen \*. One would almost think that, in the passage last mentioned, there was a reference to the words of God by the prophet; *Who, as I,—shall declare it, and set it in order for me, since I appointed the ancient people, and the things that are coming, and shall come? let them shew unto them?* Isa. xliv. 7.

This word is used by profane writers to denote such a declaration as implies an accurate and logical definition †. Therefore, here it does not simply signify that Jesus was *declared* to be the Son of God; but that, by his resurrection, he was strictly and accurately *defined* to be his Son, in such a sense as could apply to no other ‡, and so clearly, that none but those who were wilfully blind could refuse the justness of the character, as applied to him in its proper meaning.

He was thus *declared* εν δυναμει, as existing in the power of God, as essentially possessing omnipotence ||. For this is often the sense of the word, rendered *power*, when used absolutely §. We are not to understand that expression,

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\* Isa. xli. 22. xlii. 9. xliii. 9.

† Vid. Scapul. Lexic. in verb. Wolfii Cur. in loc.

‡ Wits. in Symbol. Ex. 7. f. 12.

|| Vid. Owen, Vindic. p. 174.

§ Mat. vi. 13. xxvi. 64. Rom. i. 20.

*the spirit of holiness*, as denoting the third person of the adorable Trinity. For it is immediately contrasted with the human nature of Christ. *According to the spirit* is the counterpart of that, *according to the flesh*. The former expression must, therefore, denote something in respect of which Jesus is *the Son of God*, as opposed to his being *the Son of David*. This can only be his divine nature, which seems to receive the same denomination elsewhere. Thus it is said, that *he was put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit*, 1 Pet. iii. 18. It would appear that, in the same sense, he is said to have *offered himself without spot unto God, through the eternal Spirit*, Heb. ix. 14. We have this very contrast distinctly stated by the same inspired writer, 1 Tim. iii. 16. *God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit*. As *the flesh* here undoubtedly denotes the humanity of Christ, it is most natural to understand *the Spirit*, as denoting his divinity. When the eternal Son appeared in *the flesh*, his enemies denied that he was God. But he was *justified* in his claim of deity, not only by the infinite purity \*, but by the infinite power of this nature, especially as displayed in his rising again from the dead.

The divine nature of Christ may be called *the spirit of holiness*, as he is himself designed *the most holy*, or *the holy of holies*, Dan. ix. 24. In this passage of Daniel, as Camero observes, *the holy of holies* is the subject, and *anointing* the attribute †. But it will not be refused, that this anointing denotes the work of the Holy Ghost, with respect to Jesus in his mediatory character. Therefore, he is *anointed*, who was, before, *the most holy*. Thus, the latter expression must refer to his divine nature.

There is the greatest propriety in ascribing the resurrection of Jesus to his own power. Sometimes, indeed, it is

\* Athanas. de Incarnatione Verbi Dei, Opera, vol. i. p. 592.

† Opera. p. 28.



is attributed to the Father; because it was the judicial acquittal of Jesus from all the demands of the law that he had been *made under*, and the glorious evidence of the perfection of his sacrifice. But Jesus also claims this honour to himself, as a demonstration of his essential power and glory. *Destroy this temple*, he says, *and in three days I will raise it up*, John ii. 19. *Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again*. This could be no proper reason of the Father's love, unless the Son had a sovereign authority over his own life. To shew that this is his meaning, he adds; *No one (οὐδεις) taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself: I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again*, John x. 17, 18. He indeed subjoins; *This commandment have I received of my Father*. But this no ways respects the origin of his power, but the reason of his exercising it, (in the state of a servant voluntarily assumed) in his dying and rising again. "If Christ had done no more in the resurrection, than lifted up his body, when it was revived, he had done that which any other person might have done, and so had not declared himself to be the Son of God with power \*." His resurrection, therefore, must have been so owing to his own power, as infallibly to demonstrate that he was the Son of God, of the same essence and perfection with the Father.

But what is the real import of the Socinian doctrine from this passage? It necessarily supposes, that Jesus was made *the Christ*, in some unknown nature, entirely different from the human, which is here called *the flesh*. It makes the Apostle say, that Jesus, by his resurrection, was *made or constituted the Son of God in power*, that is, a Saviour completely qualified for the great work entrusted to him; while all the circumstances attending his resurrection

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clearly

\* Pearson on the Creed, Art. 5. p. 258.

clearly shew that he could not save himself, that he had no power whatsoever, that he was merely passive in this work. According to this luminous view, the greatest display of his weakness contained the most illustrious evidence of his strength.

4. He is described as a Son, whose *obedience* implied unspeakable *condescension*. *Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered*, Heb. v. 8. In the preceding context, the inspired writer proves that Jesus did not take the honour of the priesthood to himself, but was lawfully called. Having mentioned it as a qualification requisite in an high priest, that he can *have compassion*, ver. 2. as being himself *compassed with infirmity*; he shews that Jesus was subject to sinless infirmity, by speaking of *the days of his flesh*, and of his severe sufferings during this period; and he declares that, by these sufferings, he experimentally *learned* all the difficulty of *obedience*, and therefore, from his own experience, *learned to have compassion*. Foreseeing an objection from what he had already advanced, chap. i. 2. &c. iii. 6. concerning the essential glory of Christ as the Son of God, he boldly meets it. *Though he were a Son*, in so peculiar a sense as to be *the brightness of glory*, &c. *yet learned he obedience*. The Apostle does not particularly answer the objection, knowing that it is vain to think of satisfying those who can *reply against God*. He had already said enough to satisfy every sincere believer, by shewing that *in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren*, chap. ii. 17. He had proved that this was necessary for the very end referred to,—that Jesus might be a *merciful* high priest, that he might *learn* the difficulty of *obedience*.

Did the Apostle mean, that Jesus procured the honour of filiation, or of being “chief among the sons of God,” in the same kind; there would not be the least propriety in the



the exception. For the whole force of it lies in the supposition, that his sonship naturally elevated him above the necessity of obedience. This exception, indeed, would imply the grossest impropriety. For his obedience must be considered as his title to this honour. If Jesus be an adopted Son, the language is, in every point of view, ridiculous. Was it any thing strange for an adopted Son to learn obedience, or to learn it even by suffering? Had not Abraham, and Moses, and Job done so? Or was any thing so directly the duty of such a son, as to learn obedience to his father?

We must, therefore, understand the inspired writer as speaking of a son, who was *made under a law*, which originally had no claim of obedience from him. If it should be said that the term *Son* is here to be understood as equivalent to *Mediator*, then the force of the reasoning would be; "Though he was Mediator, yet he was Mediator." For his work in this character was comprehended in that very obedience here described\*.

5. He is declared to be a Son, the *mission* of whom was the greatest manifestation of the Father's love. God so loved the world that he GAVE his only begotten Son, John iii. 16. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God SENT his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him, 1 John iv. 9. It is granted that the mission of the Son is expressed as the greatest evidence of love, in connexion with the illustrious end in view, his being a *propitiation*. But such peculiar stress is laid on the very *sending* of this person, as to convey the idea of his essential dignity. The delivering of one man to death, for the benefit of others, would have been no uncommon evidence of love from him, who had already given men for his church, and people for her life; Egypt for her ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for her, Isa. xlii. 3, 4. How small a gift

gift for him, before whom *the nations are as the drop of a bucket and the small dust of the balance!* But supposing that God had given no greater ransom; how could his love be so signally manifested by the gift? Was it so great a matter to *send* a mere man *into the world* of men?

6. He is a Son possessed of *power to destroy Satan*, and manifested for this end. *For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the Devil,* 1 John iii. 8. The same truth is otherwise expressed, ver. 5. *Ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins.* Satan, being *the ruler of the darkness of this world*, must be stronger than mere man. Indeed, the language used by John implies, that no one had been able to destroy Satan's works, before the appearance of the Son of God. Even he could not do so, but by *taking away our sins*. That this denotes a real deliverance from the guilt and dominion of sin, is clear, not only from the language here used, but from the general tenor of scriptural doctrine. *The strong man* could be *spoiled*, only by the *stronger*, Luke xi. 22. And he spoiled him, when *he himself bare our sins in his own body on the tree.*—*For this purpose the Son of God was manifested.* This language, if it mean any thing, certainly implies an existence, as *the Son of God*, previous to his manifestation in this character. How could the Son of God be manifested, had he not been the Son of God before this manifestation?

Dr P. when considering a text in which the same term is used, 1 Tim. iii. 16. *God was manifest in the flesh*, informs us that “it is literally true, that God was manifest “in the flesh of Christ,” meaning that the perfections of God, were “conspicuous in him\*.” But the Apostle's language does not merely imply that the perfections of the Father were manifest in Christ; but that his own were manifested

\* Famil. Illustr. p. 38, 39.



nifested as divine. Whatever these words signify, *God εφανερωθη, was manifest in the flesh*, is contained in the following, *The Son of God εφανερωθη, was manifested*. All the difference is, that in the latter phrase the manifestation is restricted to a person.

“It was with the greatest propriety,” our author observes, “that our Lord said, John viii. 19. *If ye had known me, ye would have known my Father also*, the wisdom and power of God being conspicuous in him \*.” But why *wisdom and power* only? Why do Socinians, even on their own principles, as to the manifestation of God, confine it to these two perfections? Are these the only perfections of the divine nature? This they will not assert. But it would seem, they were the only perfections manifested in Jesus. If so, God was not manifested in him. He could not say, with any propriety, *If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also*. For, even among men, a person is not known by one or two features in his character. The whole must be viewed. Much more is this necessary with respect to God, the knowledge of whom is infinitely more difficult.

But the Doctor adds; “They who will have this text to be a proof of the Godhead of Christ, must suppose him to be the *Father*, or the first Person in the Trinity, and not the *Son*, or the second.” What a silly sophism! The text must prove more than is meant, that, if possible, it may prove nothing. It is evidently meant to declare a sameness of nature and perfections. But because this is more than is wished, it must prove a sameness of person. Had Dr P. attended to the particle *also*, which marks a distinction of persons, he must have blushed at his own reasoning.

7. He is a Son that could be the *Saviour* of lost man. *The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world*, 1 John iv. 14. But God claims the work of salvation as  
his

\* Ibid.

his prerogative: *I, even I, am JEHOVAH; and beside me there is no Saviour*, Isa. xlii. 11. Nay, he refers to his work of salvation as the proof of his deity: *There is no God else beside me, a just God, and a Saviour; there is none beside me*, Isa. xlv. 21. *Thou shalt know no God but me, FOR there is no Saviour beside me*, Hof. xiii. 4. It is vain to say, that God employed a man as his instrument in the work of salvation. For while his language excludes the idea of the delegation of this work to a creature, we certainly know that, whatever the work of salvation was, Jesus was not employed as an instrument. For he says, *Mine own arm brought salvation unto me*, Isa. lxiii. 5. If a mere man, this language was rebellion against God. He had still taught his people that it would be *vaunting themselves against him*, if they should say, *Mine own hand hath saved me*, Judg. vii. 2. But Jesus *his own self bare our sins*, 1 Pet. ii. 24. *By himself he purged our sins*, Heb. i. 3. And undoubtedly this language denotes supreme agency in the new creation, as much as that respecting the old; *I am JEHOVAH,---that stretcheth forth the heavens ALONE, and spreadeth abroad the earth BY MYSELF*, Isa. xlv. 24.

But the mission of a Saviour is not what John principally urges in this passage. It is the mission of *the Son of God* for accomplishing the work of salvation. This he declares to be the great matter of the conviction and testimony of the ministers of Jesus: *We have seen, and do testify, that the Father sent the Son*. This is clearly the scope. For the Apostle's immediate subject is brotherly love. This he recommends, not principally from the consideration of God giving a Saviour, but from that of the Father sending his Son in this character. Therefore, he immediately adds a declaration of the necessity and blessedness of confessing Jesus as a Divine Person: *Whosoever shall con-*  

*fess*



*ness that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God, ver. 15.*

8. He is a Son, who could be *appointed*, or *constituted* *heir of all things*, Heb. i. 2. When this language is used, our Lord is undoubtedly pointed out in his mediatorial character: for in this respect alone could he receive an appointment. But the appointment is such, as not merely to imply real possession, but so extensive a possession as is totally incompatible with the state of a creature. *All things, saith Christ, are delivered unto me of my Father*, Mat. xi. 27. *All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth*, chap. xxviii. 18. He is *Lord, both of the dead and of the living*, Rom. xiv. 9. Angels and devils, saints and sinners, are under his dominion. The management of the church is wholly in his hand. All gifts and graces are at his disposal. Glory itself must be conferred by him. All the kingdoms of this world are put under his feet. Universal nature acknowledges his sovereignty. All judgment, whether in the present state or at the last day, is committed to him, John v. 22. And is a mere man, is any creature, capable of such a trust?

“It must be so;” replies the Socinian, “For the inspired writer assures us that all this power is delegated.” Let us hear our author. “It is plain from this passage,” he says, “that whatever Christ is, he is by divine appointment;—*whom he appointed heir of all things*\*. But Socinians are resolved to reckon it absurd, that a person, to whom divine powers essentially belong, should on any account whatsoever voluntarily submit to an appointment to discharge these in an inferior nature assumed by him: while they find no difficulty in conceiving, that one essentially possessing no other powers than the human should be exalted to the full exercise of those that are divine.

\* Famil. Illustr. p. 35.

vine. They refuse to believe that he, who *was in the form of God*, could *take on himself the form of a servant*. But they find it perfectly easy to believe, however strange the inversion, that he who is essentially *in the form of a servant*, may take on himself the *form of God*.

It may be said, that “great as the powers are, which the scripture ascribes to Jesus, there is nothing inconceivable in their being possessed by a mere man; if God, to whom all things are possible, be pleased to communicate them.” But nothing is possible to God, which implies a denial of his own nature. Sound reason can never admit the creation of a God, or the deification of a man, into the list of possibilities. It rejects the idea of either, as atheistical. For he who can deny or dethrone himself, is not God.

But in the context, the Apostle clearly shews, that the essential dignity of the Son is the primary foundation of his mediatory honour and trust, as *heir of all things*. For he immediately declares his glory as Creator; and having said, that *he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high*, proceeds to assign the following reason for this peculiar exaltation: *Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they*, ver. 4. This is generally understood as wholly referring to the mediatory state of Jesus; and not without apparent ground, as there is a repetition of the allusion to an earthly inheritance. But it seems more natural to understand the last reference as expressive of the essential dignity of Jesus. Thus the apostle declares, that Jesus as far excels angels, even in his mediatory character, as he does in that name which he essentially inherits\*. And what is this? We are immediately informed, that he is called the *Son*, and the *first-begotten*, ver. 5, 6. whereas these exalted creatures

\* This is certainly the proper force of *γεννητός* and *πρωτός* in connexion.



creatures are, in their highest character, only *messengers* and *ministers*, ver. 7. He is *begotten*; but they are *made*. Although there is a repeated allusion to an inheritance, yet the language is different. In the first instance, the Son is said to be *appointed* or *constituted heir*: but in the second, it is simply affirmed that he *κεκληρονομηκεν*, *hath inherited a more excellent name*. The inspired writer seems to exhibit the Son, first as an appointed, and then as a natural heir; as he means to shew that the latter is the foundation of the former. In this view, his language exactly corresponds with the testimony of the Baptist, *He that cometh after me is preferred before me, for he was before me*, John i. 15.

9. Jesus is so the Son of God, that he could be the *Creator*. *God hath spoken by the Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds*, Heb. i. 1, 2. Dr P. observes, that “the doctrine of Christ having made the world, is not expressed by any of the apostles in a manner so definite and clear, or so repeatedly, as its magnitude naturally required. For the passages in their writings from which it has been inferred that they held this opinion, are very few\*.” Will our author please to inform us, how many passages would have been necessary, as a proper foundation for faith, on a subject of this kind? He grants that there are four which are understood in this sense. And these, if clear, are as good as four hundred. But this is the rub. They “are by no means clear and express to the purpose. Had this doctrine,” he says, “been true, being of so extraordinary a nature, and so much unlike to any thing that Jews or Christians had been taught before, it would, no doubt, when it was first promulgated, have been delivered with the greatest distinctness, so as to leave no uncertainty with respect to it†.” But our author begs one question in order to prove another.

\* Ear. Op. Vol. I. p. 63.

† Ibid. p. 64.

another. He takes it for granted, that the Jews had no idea that the world was made by the personal Word of God. That this doctrine was believed by them, has been already shewn. Therefore, every argument that proved the pre-existence of Jesus as the personal Logos, was a proof of his being the Creator. Besides, the whole doctrine of the apostles, concerning the new creation, which they ascribed to him, was a more direct and seasonable illustration of his deity, than any other could have been. For during a long succession of ages, the Jews had been taught to expect this as a divine work; and it was eminently the work of that age in which the apostles wrote. I may add, that this work was not simply predicted as divine; but still appealed to by JEHOVAH, as the great proof of the truth of that revelation which he had given of himself, and as bearing such characters as would infallibly demonstrate the supreme deity of the immediate agent.

With respect to the language of the epistle, our author observes, that “in this passage it is evident, that it was not the object of the writer to make an express assertion concerning the making of the world by Christ, so as to exhibit it as an article of any consequence. He was asserting something else: and what he does say on the subject is only one incidental circumstance, among several others \*.” Our author cannot deny, however much inclined to it, that the *assertion is express*. But he makes a feeble attempt to get free of it, by pretending that it is not exhibited as an article of any consequence. Why then has it a place in the language of inspiration? Is any thing of no consequence, that *the Spirit saith unto the churches*? He interprets the language, as we shall afterwards see, with respect to the *new* creation. What then is the amount of his objection? That the whole of Christ's work, even as to salvation, is of no consequence. For surely, the sense

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\* Ear. Op. Vol. I. p. 67.



in which this *article* is understood cannot alter its importance. This, it seems, must be judged of entirely by the manner of its introduction. And it is introduced merely as an *incidental circumstance*. If the assertion be of no consequence with respect to the *old*, it can be of as little with respect to the *new* creation. It is equally incidental as to either. Whatever these *worlds* be, nothing more is said of the *making* of them. What is the plain meaning of this, but that it is not of any consequence to the church whether Christ *made the worlds* in any sense ; that is, whether he was a Saviour or not ? Here, indeed, we have a very honest acknowledgment of the genuine spirit of the Socinian doctrine.

He adds ; “ Besides, nothing is here said, or intimated ;  
 “ about Christ making the *material* worlds, for it is only  
 “ said that he made the *ages* (*αιωνας*) and the *all things*  
 “ here mentioned evidently means all things relating to a  
 “ particular object, *viz.* the mission of Christ, and not all  
 “ the works of nature \*.” But it is to beg the question a second time, to say that by *all things* we are to understand only *some things*. Although *αιωνας* were meant in our author’s sense, this term could not limit the preceding declaration, but only denote a part of the *all things* previously mentioned. The Doctor gives his view of the phrase more clearly in another place. By *ages* he understands “ the  
 “ present dispensation of God’s government over mankind,  
 “ which is established by the gospel, the administration of  
 “ which is committed to the Son †.”

But if the *ages* mean a *dispensation* only, and if the *all things* are to be restricted by this sense, Jesus is not an *heir*, but merely a steward. So far is he from being *heir of all things*, that he is not heir of any thing. This frivolous exception hath been removed an hundred times already. It hath been shewn, that the term *αιων* is never used absolutely,

\* Ib. p. 67.

† Fam. Illustr. p. 35.

lutely, as denoting the gospel-state; but that, in this sense, it is always connected with some other term, as *μελλων*, chap. vi. 5.; and that this dispensation is no where said to be *made*. The scope of the writer also opposes this sense. For, having asserted that the Son is appointed heir, he proceeds to illustrate the propriety of this dispensation, by declaring his creative power. He was fully qualified to be heir of all, who had given being to all. Besides, he goes on to assert that the Son *upholdeth all things*. This declaration exactly corresponds with what has been already mentioned. He alone can uphold, who hath created.

It is certainly necessary for Dr P. to shew how a single dispensation can be called *the ages*. If the mere state of the church or world were meant by this term, it would undoubtedly include the Jewish, as well as the Christian, dispensation. The succession of *ages to come* cannot help our author. For the language respects the past, and not the future: *He made*. I shall only add, that the same word occurs in this epistle, where there can be no doubt that the first creation is meant: *Through faith we understand that* (*τῆς αἰωνας*) *the worlds were framed by the word of God*, chap. xi. 3.

The same work is ascribed to the Son in another passage;—*Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature. For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist; and he is the head of the body, the church, &c.* Col. i. 15. 16. “On this passage,” according to our author, “it is obvious to remark, that the things which Christ is said to have made are not the heavens or the earth, but some things that were *in* the heavens, and *in* the earth\*.” If he made

\* Ear. Op. vol. i. p. 66.



made all the inhabitants, it is natural to suppose that he made the habitations also. But by *all things that are*, Dr P. understands only *some* things that *were*, in heaven and in earth. For the mode of expression leaves the reader uncertain, whether he means that they are still there, or not. "These," he says, "were not natural objects, such as stars or planets, trees or animals, &c. but the creation, or establishment, of such things as *thrones* or *dominions*." There seems to be still an absolute chaos in our author's brain, with respect to this subject. He can find nothing *incidental* here. But the doctrine is by no means *definite and clear*. He can safely tell you what these things are not; but though they are *all things in heaven and in earth*, he cannot venture to say what they are. They are, indeed, "such things as *thrones* and *dominions*." But he so greatly venerates *such things* as these, that he dares not attempt to describe them. Does he really mean, that *all things*, whether in heaven or in earth, are *thrones* and *dominions*, or such things as these? No. He only means that these are the only things that are *created*, that is, established. For this, he adds, may "therefore be naturally interpreted as referring to some exercise of that *power in heaven and in earth*, which Christ says was given to him after his resurrection." He supposes so at least, from the similarity of sound. For he will not attempt to give the sense. He is quite a stranger to this *exercise*, though by the Apostle called a *creation*, and extended to *all things*. The reader will therefore please to consider it as *obvious*, that by *all things* he ought to understand *some* only; and by the *creation* of *all things*, the *establishment* of some things, or at least, *some exercise* that may peradventure bear this name. But he must beware of asking, what this creation or establishment is. For our author can hardly hazard a conjecture as to the things said, or supposed, to be

established. One thing, however, he can venture to assert ; that the making of a *tree* is too great a work for the Saviour.

But his ideas on this subject do not seem to have been so dark, when engaged in *illustrating* some passages of scripture. “ By creation,” he says, “ we are to understand “ the *new creation*, or *renovation*, in which sense the same “ word is used by the Apostle, Eph. ii. 10. *We are his “ workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works.* “ So great a change is produced in the world, in the tem- “ pers and conduct of men by the gospel, that both the “ terms *creation* and *regeneration* are made use of to ex- “ press it \*.”

We are far from wishing to deny, that the change effected by the gospel is called a *creation*. But, of all men, Socinians plead this application of the term with the worst grace. For they ascribe so little agency to Jesus, in the work of the new creation, as to bring discredit on the Spirit of inspiration for using so emphatic a term. Did they understand it in its proper sense, when applied to the gospel ; did they really ascribe to the Son of God that *exceeding greatness of power* required in the new creation ; they could not hesitate to acknowledge his supreme agency in the old.

Dr P. refers to several passages of scripture, in order to prove that the effect of the gospel is called a new creation. But where this is the case, there is undoubted evidence, and generally from the use of distinctive terms, that the new is meant. This is undeniable as to all the passages referred to. In Eph. ii. 10. we read of a *new man* ; in 2 Cor. v. 17. of a *new creature* ; in Isa. lxv. 17. of a *new heaven*, and a *new earth*. But in the passage immediately under consideration, creation is spoken of absolutely.

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\* Fam. Illust. p. 43.



The Doctor, indeed, seems to be conscious that, according to his system, the use of this term, with respect to the gospel, may appear somewhat unnatural. Therefore, he is at pains to provide an apology for the language of the Holy Ghost. But some may be apt to think that the business is “worse for mending.” “We shall see less *harshness*, he says, in this figure (for it seems, it is *harsh* at best) when we consider that what is called the *Mosaic creation* was probably similar to this; since for any thing we know, it was only the *re-making* or *re-constituting* of the world, out of a former chaos.” Whether this doctrine affords any inlet to Deism, or to something worse, let the Christian reader judge. It has hitherto been thought by the *weaker* part of mankind, that creation, in the strict sense of the word, was the *calling of things that be not, as though they were*; and that God created the heavens, and the earth, *in the beginning*. On the ground of our author’s supposition, it may with equal propriety be denied that the world had any beginning. For an Atheist might say to him; “If you grant that what is called the *Mosaic creation* was not the origin of all things, what other will you fix on? Your pretended revelation forsakes you, from the moment that you renounce the Mosaic æra.” Whatever Dr P. *knows* with respect to this creation, the church of Christ has still known, and *understood, through faith*, that the worlds were *so* framed by the word of God, *that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear*, Heb. xi. 3. and therefore not of any pre-existent chaos. For this could not have been invisible. This framing of the worlds must necessarily be that described by Moses. For it could not otherwise be understood *through faith*: because faith reaches no farther than a divine testimony. But in our enlightened age, even some who profess Christianity reckon it far more safe to trust to the pe-

netrating eye of philosophy, than to the feeblé eye of faith.

Our author, however, will find it hard to support his hypothesis, as to the meaning of the passage before us, even with the aid of atheistical supposition. For the connexion of the Apostle's language clearly shews, that he here speaks of the first creation. He asserts that God's *dear Son* is *the first begotten of all creation*. Whether we view this phrase as signifying that he was begotten before all creatures, and thus as expressive of his essential dignity; or as denoting his mediatorial authority over all, by an allusion to the right of primogeniture; the inference is the same. For it immediately follows; *For by him were all things created*. Is it inquired, why the Son is said to be begotten before all creatures? The reason is, *Because (οτι) by him, all things were created*. Or, why he is Lord of all. The answer is the same. He has an original and essential right to this dignity. His right of dominion is evidently considered as commensurate with his agency in creation: and the latter is mentioned as the primary foundation of the former. This manner of reasoning was perfectly familiar to God's ancient church: *The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein. For he hath founded it,----and established it*, Psal. xxiv. 1, 2.

The extent of the work ascribed to the Son, clearly shews that the first creation is meant. *By him, all things were created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible or invisible*. But Dr P. informs us, that "when all things are said to be created by Christ,----nothing can be meant but such things as can properly come under his government as the Messiah, and be subservient to him in the conduct of it, including probably the *visible* powers and kingdoms of this world, and the *invisible* administration of angels \*." But this is evidently putting darkness for

\* Ibid.



for light. For nothing can be more plain, than that the Apostle's language respects neither the visible nor invisible *administration* of the powers mentioned, but the visible and invisible *ministers themselves*; not their suberviency to the kingdom of the Messiah, but their very existence. The Doctor wishes it to appear, that the language of this place does not respect *persons*, but only the stations occupied by them. But the same terms, in other passages, undoubtedly denote persons, and can bear no other meaning. Is it the angelic model of government in the abstract that the same Apostle intends, when he declares that *the manifold Wisdom of God is made known to the principalities and powers in heavenly places?* Eph. iii. 10. When he says, *We wrestle—against principalities and powers*, does he not mean the *rulers themselves, the rulers of the darkness of this world?* vi. 12. Or can his language bear any other sense, when he tells us, in that very epistle in which he ascribes the creation of these to Christ, that he *spoiled principalities and powers, and made a shew of them openly?* chap. ii. 15. It was common with the ancient Jewish writers to call the angels, or at least one order of them, *thrones* \*. Gill's view of the passage seems very natural. “The Apostle's sense is, that the *angels*, the invisible inhabitants of the upper world, are all created by Christ, let them be called by what name they will, that the Jews, or the false teachers, or any sort of heretics of those times thought fit to give them, whether they called them *thrones*, or *dominions*, &c †.”

It seems to have been customary with the Jews, at the time that the Apostle wrote, to distinguish all created things in the way he does in this passage. What he ascribes to Christ with respect to creation, Philo ascribes to *the Lord the Archangel* with respect to government. “For it must be understood,” he says, “that as a charioteer, or as a pilot,

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\* Sepher Jetzira Zikhone Zohar, &c. see Gill on the place. † Ibid.

“ he who is presides over bodies and souls, and every li-  
 “ ving thing, over minds and angels, over earth, air and  
 “ heaven, over sensible powers, over invisible natures, over  
 “ all things unseen and seen \*.”

But although the term *all* were limited to “ such things  
 “ as can properly come under Christ's government as the  
 “ Messiah ;” if the language of this passage denote the *new*  
*creation*, or *renovation*, our author's view is clogged with  
 absurdity. For it must follow that all *such things* were  
 created anew. Therefore, as devils themselves are sub-  
 jected to this government, they must be considered as *re-*  
*made*, that is, *renewed* by Christ Jesus.

“ And therefore,” our author adds, “ the Apostle, with  
 “ great propriety concludes and sums up the whole of  
 “ Christ's authority, by saying that *he is the head of the*  
*“ body the church.”* Why “ with great propriety?” Be-  
 cause, forsooth, “ nothing can be meant,” but what our mo-  
 dern divine thinks *proper*. According to his plan of in-  
 terpretation, “ Christ's authority would, indeed, be easily  
 “ summed up ;” and there could be no security that it  
 would not soon come to a *conclusion*. But before our au-  
 thor can shew that, in his sense, “ the Apostle sums up  
 “ the whole of Christ's authority,” he must prove that  
*thrones and dominions, principalities and powers*, are a part  
 of Christ's *body the church*. However, instead of *summing*  
*up*, the Apostle evidently proceeds to another subject.

In the three preceding verses, he has declared the essen-  
 tial glory of the Saviour : For it seems most natural to un-  
 derstand that expression, *the first born of every creature*, of  
 2 his

\* Εμηνυε δε το οναρ, εστηριγμενον επι της κλιμακος τον αρχαγγελον κυριον: υπερανω γαρ ως αρματος ηνιοχον, η νεως κυβερνητην, υποληπτεον ισα-  
 σθαι το ον, επι σωματων, επι ψυχων, επι θρεμματων, επι λογων, επι αγγε-  
 λων, επι γης, επ' αερος, επ' υρανν, επ' αισθητων δυναμεων, επ' αορατων φυ-  
 αεων, οσαπερ, αδεατα και θεατα. De Somniis, p. 457.



his pre-existence. Now, he illustrates the glory of Christ as Mediator. He first declares his authority in general, as reaching to every creature ; then more particularly, as respecting the subjects of the new creation.

That the Apostle makes a transition from the divine to the mediatory character of Jesus, is evident from various considerations. In the preceding verse, he had asserted the priority of Christ to all creatures : *And he is before all things* \*. Dr P. however, denies that this is the sense. “ *Before*,” he says, “ often signifies before in point of *rank*, “ and *pre-eminence*, and not in point of *time* ; so that when “ Christ is said to be *before all things*, the meaning is, that “ he is the *chief*, or *most excellent* of all.” For this we have only our author’s bare assertion. He does not produce a single passage in proof of it ; and, as would seem, for a very good reason : for we do not know of one that could be tortured into this form. Observe, how well his view agrees with the tenor of the passage. For, according to it, there is the closest connexion between the seventeenth and eighteenth verses ; as both respecting the same subject. *He is before all things* in point of *pre-eminence*,—*that in all things he might have the pre-eminence*.

The ascription of providence to the Son, in the preceding verse, is another proof that the Apostle changes his subject. *By him*, he says, *all things consist*, ver. 17. The Doctor remarks on this clause ; “ When it is said that *in him all things consist*, we are to understand that in him “ all things are *completed*, and compacted ; since the Christian dispensation is the last, completing one great and regular scheme of revelation, continually advancing from “ the more imperfect to the more perfect †.” But the *all things* here mentioned, must be the same as in ver. 16. These our author has understood to be “ the powers and “ kingdoms of this world, and the administration of angels.”

I would wish to know, how the kingdoms of this world are "completed and compacted" in the Son of God. It has been seen that devils are among the *things invisible*. It may, therefore, be also necessary to inform us, how they receive their *completion* in him.

The change of subject is further evident from the new character introduced by the Apostle, ver. 18. *The first begotten from the dead*. He contrasts this character of Jesus as Mediator with what he had ascribed to him as the Son,---*the first begotten of all creation*, ver. 15. If the subject be the same, the Apostle is chargeable with a vain repetition, when he speaks of Christ's *reconciling all things to himself, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven*, ver. 19. For the term *reconciling* properly denotes the work of the *new creation*; and according to Dr P.'s view, must convey the same idea as that in ver. 16. *By him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth*.

If this passage does not respect creation in a literal sense, it will scarcely be possible to fix on any other, referring to this work, which may not, by the same lawless ingenuity, be wrested from its natural meaning. The Doctor has materially acknowledged this, and given us a cue. When it is said, *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth*, he who pleases may understand this language as meaning nothing more than that they were *re-made, re-constituted*, or *new-modelled*. By the way, I should like to know, if *all the host of them* (Gen. ii. 1.) are to be considered as the subjects of a similar renovation.

But Dr P., even according to his strange interpretation, still grants too much to the Son of God. He is under a necessity of acknowledging that *all things were made for him* as Messiah\*. But that of being the final cause of any of the works of God, is too great an honour for any creature.

This

\* Ver. 16.



This belongs to God only. For he hath *made all things for himself*. For his pleasure they are, and were, created. Therefore, he, who is the Messiah, must be a divine Person: otherwise, God gives his glory to another.

10. Jesus is declared to be a Son who is *the brightness of glory, and the express image of his Father's person*, Heb. i. 3. It being the great design of the inspired writer to the Hebrews, to turn the attention of that people from the type to the antitype; in the first expression, he seems to allude to the cloud of glory which covered the mercy-seat. This was the principal symbol of the presence of God in his church, the visible manifestation of his glory. Therefore the Godman is, with peculiar propriety, called *the brightness of glory*. Thus, the Jews are taught that he is the true Shechinah, who had formerly dwelt, in a typical manner, among his people, manifesting to them the glory of the divine nature, in its relation to a work of grace.

He is also designed *the express image of his*, that is, the Father's *person*. Whatever be the particular allusion here, the language denotes that Jesus essentially possesses all divine perfections; and that he manifests all these to men. He is so *the image of the invisible God*, Col. i. 15. that *the light of the knowledge of the glory of God* is in his face or person, 2 Cor. iv. 6. Dr P. asserts that all these expressions “allude to the divine power and wisdom which were “displayed in” Christ, “when he was on earth, but more “especially now that he is ascended into heaven. At the “same time,” he says, “Christ being called only the *image* “of God, is a sufficient intimation that he is not God himself\*.” The last assertion is true in the scriptural sense. The Son is not the Father. But it has formerly been seen, that the term *God* is often used distinctively, to denote the first Person; as the term *Lord*, to denote the second. Therefore, it may be said with equal propriety, that *God* is not the *Lord*, because Christ is so.

But

\* Famil. Illustr. p. 23.

But the Doctor adds ; “ Indeed, if this expression was  
 “ to be allowed to be any proof of the divinity of Christ,  
 “ it would follow that Adam was God.” This is one of  
 these *hard speeches* which the Lord will judge. It is not  
 only impious, but futile. Our author pretends to found  
 this observation on these words, Gen. i. 26, 27. *God made  
 man in his own image, and after his likeness.* But this lan-  
 guage concerning Adam, is very different from that used  
 with respect to our Lord. Adam was formed *in* the image  
 of God. Christ is the image of God. Adam was *made*,  
 Christ *begotten*. Adam is spoken of as the image of an  
 image ; Christ, as the image of a Person.

Socinians themselves virtually grant the vanity of what  
 is alleged by the Doctor. For while they confine the di-  
 vine image, in which man was created, to dominion over  
 the creatures, they find it necessary to enlarge their ideas  
 with respect to Christ. They acknowledge that “ divine  
 “ power and wisdom were displayed in him.” The image  
 of God, as communicated to Adam, especially consisted in  
 knowledge, righteousness and holiness, Col. iii. 10. Eph. iv.  
 24. But Jesus is *the express image of the Father's person*, as  
 possessing all perfection. For if Jesus hath not all divine  
 perfection, he is falsely called the *character* of a divine  
 person. If he hath, he is himself God ; or that question  
 can no longer be proposed, *To whom will ye liken me, and  
 make me equal, and compare me, that we may be like ?* Isa.  
 xlv. 5. For in this case, a creature might be God's equal,  
 to whom he might be strictly likened.

But the language used in the passage before us cannot  
 apply to any creature, however exalted. For, in the first  
 place, the glory here meant is undoubtedly that of God.  
 Now, he, who is *the brightness of glory*, must possess all  
 that glory which is essential to him whom he represents.  
 This expression does not signify a reflection, or secondary  
 manifestation



manifestation of a borrowed splendor, but that very splendor which belongs to the glorious object; as that of the sun, who is seen by his own light. Secondly, Whosoever is *the express image* of a person, must represent the nature and all the perfections of that person. We have no right to confine the language to “power and “wisdom,” or any particular attribute. For it has no limitation. It is generally thought that the term *χαρακτηρ* refers to the impression made by a seal on wax\*. When the impression is fair, every line is *characterized*. Thus, he who is the *express image* of a divine person, must have every essential perfection of God; eternity, immensity, immutability, omniscience, &c. as well as wisdom and power. Unless this be the case, we cannot conceive that Jesus could say, without the most unparalleled presumption and blasphemy; *He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father*, John xiv. 9. Thirdly, This image must *personally* represent him whose image he is. We cannot form the idea of one person being the *express image* of another, where the image is of a different species from the person who is represented. It would be absurd to say, that a man is the *express image* of the person of an angel; because they are not persons of the same order. Much more absurd must it be to say, that a man is the *express image* of the *Person* of God; because the one is infinitely removed from the other.

11. Jesus receives this designation, as implying his essential and universal dominion in the kingdom of *providence*. *God—bath spoken by the Son---who upholdeth all things by the word of his power*, Heb. i. 1.—3. Dr P. informs us, that this is “God’s power †.” It is so indeed; but not in his sense, as excluding the Son. Here our author seems to follow Grotius. But the construction excludes this view; the relative *his* naturally referring to the person *upholding*. But let us suppose, for a moment, that the Doctor’s interpretation

\* Vid. Glassii Rhetor. Sac. p. 175.

† Famil. Illustr. p. 35.

pretation is just. What would follow? That Jesus is a creature? By no means. For it is admitted that he is the immediate agent in providence. Can a creature have omnipotence in trust? Can he even utter the *word* of almighty power? Can he so *command*, that all things shall *stand fast*? It is fully as ridiculous to suppose that a creature can *uphold by the word* of God's power, as that he can *create* by the same means. For the language here used evidently refers to the divine power exerted in creation; and denotes that the work of providence is merely a continued exertion of this power, in the same manner, Psal. xxxiii. 9. cxlviii. 5. But according to the supposition, a creature must not only be entrusted with omnipotence, but possessed of omnipresence. For this *upholding* extends to *all things*. However, it has been already proved that *the worlds*, said to be made by him, are the material worlds. Therefore, the *all things* here mentioned must be understood with the same latitude.

The language of this place is of the same import with that in Col. i. 15. *By him all things consist*. This has been formerly vindicated from our author's gloss. Nothing more is here ascribed to Jesus, than what he claims as his prerogative, when he says; *My Father worketh hitherto, and I work*, John v. 17. This we have also seen, can signify nothing but a continued sameness of operation.

12. He is exhibited as the Son of God in so peculiar a sense, as to be entitled to the *worship* of the most exalted creatures: *When he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him*, Heb. i. 6. Dr P., without a single reflection on this text, endeavours, in a circuitous manner, to invalidate the argument drawn from it, in proof of the deity of the Son. After quoting it, he adds a number of passages from the gospel-history, which refer to the worship of Christ, subjoin-



ing this remark ; “ But the very circumstances in which  
 “ this worship was paid to Christ, sufficiently prove that  
 “ divine worship was not intended \*.”

The first circumstance mentioned is, that “ it is well  
 “ known that the Jews had no expectation of any other  
 “ person than a man for their Messiah.” This is a very  
 useful circumstance to our learned author. It is ready on  
 all occasions. Does he combat an argument from eccle-  
 siastical history, in support of our Saviour’s divinity ? Is it  
 proved that the first believers adored the Son ? He tells  
 you that this is impossible ; because the Jews believed that  
 the Messiah would be a mere man. Is it an argument  
 from scripture ? It receives the same answer. Here he op-  
 poses it to the testimony of the Holy Spirit respecting an  
 express precept. This is its force : “ God commanded his  
 “ very angels to worship the Son. But he undoubtedly  
 “ meant that they should regulate their homage, according  
 “ to the ideas of that people who nationally rejected and  
 “ crucified him as a blasphemer.” Though the Doctor’s  
 assertion were true, it might with equal propriety be urged,  
 that we are not to believe in Jesus as a *spiritual* Messiah,  
 because the generality of the Jews did not expect one in  
 this character. But it has been proved that those who  
*waited for the consolation of Israel*, expected a divine Sa-  
 viour. It has been often said, that we cannot form a just  
 idea of a man’s character, without hearing what his enemies  
 say of him. And it must be acknowledged that Dr P.  
 seems disposed rigidly to observe this rule, in judging of  
 him whom he calls Master.

But let us attend to another circumstance : “ When Ni-  
 “ codemus was convinced of the miraculous power of Jesus,  
 “ he concluded, not that he was *God*, but that he must  
 “ have been *impowered by God* ; for he says, John iii. 2.—

“ No

\* Ibid. p. 27.

“ *No man can do these miracles,—except God be with him.*”

The Doctor has already examined Christ's enemies on the point. The second witness he summons, is one whom Jesus himself hath declared incompetent, as being ignorant, and yet in unbelief, ver. 10—12. But; perhaps, our author has a partiality for this *master of Israel*, as he discovered such philosophical antipathy to the doctrine of regeneration.

It is mentioned as another “ well-known ” circumstance, “ that the Greek word, which, in the above mentioned “ passages, is rendered *worship*, is frequently used to express a very high degree of respect, but such as may be lawfully paid to men of a proper character and rank; and indeed,” it is said, “ our word *worship*, though now appropriated to that worship which is due to God only, “ was formerly used with greater latitude, and even in our translation of the Bible; as when a servant, in one of our Saviour's parables, is said to have fallen down and *worshiped* his master, saying, *Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all*; where certainly divine worship could not be meant.” The Doctor artfully blends the signification of the Greek word with the ancient use of the English. This he seems to do, because of his scarcity of evidence from the original. But what has the meaning of an English word to do with that of a Greek one? Can the use of a word in one language prove its determinate sense in another? The only instance from the New Testament, which seems to have occurred as a proof that *προσκυνεω* frequently signifies civil homage, is that in Mat. xviii. 26. Our translators certainly did right in rendering it *worshiped*. Though this were a true history, it would not prove what Dr P. wishes. For many a one, from fear, from fashion, or from interest, has given religious worship to a mere man. But it must be remembered, that this is a parable:

parable:



rable : and it is a *well known* rule, that parables and allegories are not to be interpreted as if, in every circumstance, they corresponded to facts. But, indeed, it seems most natural to think that, in this parable, our Lord represents the worship given to him who *can forgive sin*.

Dr P. is so much at a loss for proofs on this subject, that he borrows one from the book of Common Prayer. “ It is also an evidence,” he says, “ of this use of the word, that in our marriage service, the man is directed to say to the woman, *With my body I thee worship*; and the terms *worship*, and *worshipful*, are still applied to several of our magistrates, and bodies of men.” But I cannot perceive the meaning of all this; unless our author means to do seriously, what a facetious divine did in jest, when he attempted to prove that all languages were derived from the English. It would be necessary for the Doctor, indeed, to carry the matter a step farther, by shewing, that the sense of words in other languages is to be strictly regulated by that of those which most nearly correspond to them in ours. As he has referred his reader to the Marriage Service, he ought to have explained the passage, that it might be known what kind or degree of *worship* he means. He should also have told us, if προσκυνεω is generally to be understood as merely signifying such a degree of respect as is due to a Justice of Peace, or to a Common Council; and if he thinks that nothing more is intended in the command addressed to angels. It may, indeed, be supposed by some, that such creatures as those referred to, meet with more worship from their dependents, than Socinians allow to their Lord and Saviour. For they are often the *objects* of *prayer*.

The argument derived from the occasional use of this word in the Septuagint, is of no weight, when opposed to positive evidence from the language of inspiration.

There

There are several circumstances worthy of attention on the other side. It has been formerly proved that the passages referred to by the Doctor, in which Christ is said to be worshipped, are all to be understood of religious adoration \*. As far as I can observe, there is not one place in the New Testament, which can be understood otherwise. If religious worship be not meant in this passage, the end by no means corresponds to the solemnity of the action. For those who were appointed to be *ministring spirits* to all *the heirs*, could not be supposed to be deficient in *respect* to *the author of salvation*. But when we understand the term of religious homage, we perceive great propriety in the solemn injunction. Thus it appears, that the incarnation of the Son, by which he was *made a little lower than the angels*, was to be no obstacle to the continuance of their adoration.

This passage is generally supposed to refer to Psal. xcvi. 7. *Worship him, all ye gods*: especially as this name seems to be sometimes given to angels. There can be no doubt that the command there respects religious worship. For the person meant, who is undoubtedly the Messiah, is directly opposed, as the proper object of worship, to those false deities mentioned immediately before; *Confounded be, all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols*. If we attend to the connexion in which the command is introduced by the inspired writer, there can be no reason to doubt that it respects religious worship. For, as hath been proved, he has previously declared that the Son is the God of nature, and of providence. We have formerly seen in what sense angels themselves understood the worship expressed by this term, and of course, the sense in which they must have understood the command. When the Divine fell down at the feet of one of these pure spirits,

\* See above, p, 214, 215.



rits, προσκυνῆσαι αὐτῷ, to give him the “very high degree of respect,” which this word denotes, he instantly replied; *See, thou do it not, τῷ Θεῷ προσκυνῆσον, worship God, Rev. xix. 10.*

We are certain that angels obey this command in the fullest sense of the word. For the same inspired writer testifies, that he heard *every creature in heaven, saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever, Rev. v. 13.* How he can be a partner in the highest adoration, who is not of the same essence with the Father, let Socinians explain.

13. He is described as a Son who has an essential right to the name of God, in the full sense of the word. *Unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever, Heb. i. 8.* Socinians seem to be conscious that this name, when used absolutely and restricted to an individual, as it is here, invariably denotes the true God. Therefore they endeavour to avert the force of the argument from this passage, by objecting to the translation. Some of their more ancient writers, indeed, among whom was Biddle, had so much honesty as to acknowledge that the Son is here called God †. But Dr P. is not disposed to make such a concession. He observes that the passage “may be rendered, *God is thy throne for ever and ever*; that is, *God will establish the authority of Christ till time shall be no more\*.*” This idea seems to have been first thrown out by Erasmus; though he was not satisfied that it was just. However, it was eagerly laid hold of by Grotius and Enjedinus, as expressing the true sense of the place. But this view is liable to several important objections. It is contrary to the meaning of the Hebrew; as far as ancient interpreters, whether Jews or Greeks, can be con-

dered as judges. According to the Targum, *God* is in the vocative. In the Septuagint, it is rendered in the same manner, as in the Greek of the New Testament. The Doctor's ancient Unitarian friend, Aquila, whose learning he greatly commends, seems never to have thought that it could bear any other sense than that given in our version. There can be no dispute as to the meaning of his language \*.

This view is inconsistent with the preceding context, in which the Son is described as the Creator and Preserver of all things, and as the object of worship; and therefore, as God equal with the Father. It also changes the natural subject. This ought to be the *throne* of the Son, as contrasted with the *ministerial* station of angels, which is the subject of the preceding verse; nay, such a throne as can belong to him alone who is essentially *God*, in contradistinction to the ministry of those who are mere *creatures*, and who were *made* for the purpose of this ministry: Of the angels he saith, *Who maketh his angels, or messengers spirits.—But unto the Son, Thy throne, O God, &c.* But according to the Socinian version, *God* is the subject; not as opposed to *angels*, but as opposed to the *Son*. The honour is carried away from the Son to the Father, in direct opposition to the evident design of the inspired writer. Nor is this interpretation supported by the clause immediately following in the closest connexion; *The sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre*. Socinians ought to shew, how *God* is the *sceptre*, as well as the *throne* of Christ's kingdom; else we are left to suppose that although it has a divine foundation, the administration is merely human.

But they cannot produce a single example from scripture of the use of such language. *God* is often claimed by his people as their *rock*, their *refuge*, their *high tower*: but it is no where said that he is the *throne* of his creature. The  
idea,

\* Ο θεος ος, Θεε, εις αβαντα και επι.



idea, indeed, is absurd. When he is called a *rock*, &c. it is consistent with his dignity : for such expressions denote that defence which is afforded by the stronger to the weaker. But the Sovereign is certainly greater than his *throne*. Thus, the enemies of the Son, in attempting to prove that he is essentially inferior to the Father, make the Father inferior to the Son. However, they wish to supply the word *establish*. I will not say, that this is to suppose a strong figure without any necessity. For with them the necessity is as great as that of providing a crutch for the lame. But it is evidently to suppose a mode of speaking to be found no where else ; and instead of explaining the text to make one of their own.

The Doctor adds ; “ From this passage nothing can be  
 “ more plain, than that, whatever authority belongs to  
 “ Christ, he has a superior from whom he derives it ; *God*,  
 “ *even thy God, has anointed thee*. This could never have  
 “ been said of the one true God, whose being and power are  
 “ underived.” It is granted that this is not immediately said of him as God, but as God-man or Mediator. It is no objection to his being addressed as *God*, that the subject of the address is his mediatory exaltation. For while the official character of Jesus requires the deity of the person as its foundation, it cannot possibly imply any forfeiture of his essential right. The glory of the God-head is displayed in human nature. Socinians, however, have laid it down as a first principle in their system, that although God may communicate his essential perfections to a mere creature, he cannot assume the creature into union with himself, and thus stand in a relation different from what essentially belongs to him. God may *deny*, but he cannot *humble himself*. But it is impossible for them to prove, that he who is inferior to the Father in one relation, may not be his equal in another. If this appear from scripture, we are bound to believe it :

and there can be no objection to this being the doctrine of the passage, but that Socinians are determined to reject this doctrine, however clear the evidence.

But that Jesus is here addressed as a divine Person, is undeniable from the quotation immediately following; *And thou, Lord, in the beginning, hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou remainest, &c.* ver. 10.—12. Our learned author is much at a loss what to make of these words. He tries them first in one way, then in another, and at length hazards a conjecture as to a third. “In ver. 10, 11, 12.” he says, “the apostle quotes an address to God, as the great Creator and everlasting Ruler of the universe, but without any hint of its being applied to Christ\*.” But as if this were carrying the matter rather too far, it being undeniable that the preceding context contains some *hints* concerning him, the Doctor advances a step farther. But he advances with great caution, as treading on dangerous ground. “This quotation was *probably* made with a view to express the great honour conferred on Christ, on account of the dignity of the person who conferred it.” But this is rather a round-about way of expressing honour, and far from being usual with the concise and energetic writer of this epistle. Had this been his design, it might have been as natural a plan to have told what the honour was. Some may be apt to doubt too, whether one, writing to Hebrews, and having already told them that the honour referred to was conferred by God, *who spake to their fathers by the prophets*, could give them a better idea of its greatness, by telling them that this God was “the Creator and Ruler of the universe.” An Hebrew would certainly have reckoned this a very poor compliment to his own understanding, and a sufficient proof of the weakness of his who thus addressed them.

But,

\* Ibid.



But, according to Dr P. the *probability* of this appears from evidence. “*For it immediately follows, ver. 13. “But to which of the angels said he, that is, the great “being to whom this description belongs, Sit thou on my “right hand, &c.”* But this is evidently to be viewed as a distinct proof from the former. Our author artfully tries to throw the emphasis on the pronoun *he*; whereas every impartial reader must observe that it rests upon these words, *which of the angels*. For the inspired writer is not abstractly illustrating the dignity of *him* who said this; nor does he mean to infer the dignity of the person to whom this was said, from so remote a consideration as the greatness of the speaker. But he illustrates this in a direct manner, by denying the honour of such an address to any of the angels, how exalted soever. Therefore he immediately asserts that they are *all*, without exception, *ministring spirits*, not merely to the King of Zion, but to his subjects: evidently inferring from this consideration, that they could never receive a call to that honour reserved for their Lord. He *sits* as a Sovereign. He *sits on God’s right hand*, as being essentially his *fellow*. But they are *all sent forth* as servants.

After all, the Doctor advances a little; as if conscious that he must grant something more, however reluctantly, unless he would seem to trifle with his text. “Or since “this quotation from the Psalmist,” he says, “describes a “perpetuity of empire in God, it may be intended to intimate a perpetuity of empire in Christ, who holds his “authority from God, and who must hold it, unless God be “unable to support it.” Still very cautious. It *may—intimate*. But it cannot even intimate so much. If these words properly respect the empire of God, they can prove nothing as to the perpetuity of the government of the Messiah. Did we suppose that he were a mere man, and had

we no better security for the perpetuity of his empire, than the perpetuity of the divine; we could not be more certain of the continuance of his, than of any human government. For *the powers that be are also of God*. Yet they are subject to change. The quotation must be viewed by itself, as resting on its own foundation: and if it proves nothing directly as to the dignity of the Person who is Messiah, or as to the nature of his kingdom, it proves nothing at all. But though this should be the case, it is no more than what we may expect. For our author, who seems to think that even *the spirits of the Apostles are subject unto him*, assures us that Paul, the reputed writer of this epistle, “often reasons inconclusively, and therefore---  
“without any particular inspiration \*.”

Indeed, he seems to be at pains to make the Apostle reason *inconclusively*. For if the reasoning of the passage, according to the Doctor's interpretation, could prove any thing, it would prove unspeakably more than he would choose to admit. If the description of “a perpetuity of empire in God,” be any *intimation* of “a perpetuity of empire in Christ,” it must certainly intimate that the empire of Christ shall continue as long as the empire of God, as long as God is not “unable to support it.” Now, Dr P. will not refuse that the divine empire is strictly eternal. But how will this agree with what he has said in explaining the preceding quotation? All the perpetuity that he ascribes to the empire of Christ, is the “establishment of his authority till time shall be no more.”

But notwithstanding all the shuffling modes of interpretation that may be devised, it is clear from the connexion that the inspired writer applies the language of the Psalm to our Lord. Socinians themselves acknowledge that he is the subject of the preceding quotations, however strangely they explain them. It is also evident from the introductory particle *καί*, *And*. There is no correspondent word, either



either in the Hebrew, or in the Septuagint. It undoubtedly signifies that the quotation following is to be applied in the same manner as the preceding; and refers to the beginning of ver. 8. *But unto the Son he saith.* To every unprejudiced reader, it must convey the same idea as if that introduction had been formally repeated.

14. Jesus is a Son in so peculiar a sense that the *church* is declared to be *his building* and *property*. In the same epistle, chap. iii. a comparison is instituted between Moses and Christ. The design of the Apostle is to prove the superiority of the latter. He shews that there is as great a difference between the one and the other, as between the house and the builder of it: *For ουτος, this person was truly worthy of more glory than Moses, in as much as he who hath builded the house, hath more honour than the house,* ver. 3. He shews that Moses was merely a servant in the house of God, but *Christ a Son over his own house*, ver. 5, 6. Christ, by dispensation, was also a servant. In this respect, he is said to have been *faithful*. But his fidelity was not that of a natural inferior. *He was faithful as a Son.* He was not merely *in* the house, like Moses; but *over* it: and not *over* it, like one advanced to an honour that did not originally belong to him; but *over* it, *as his own house*, his natural property. But how can the church be the property of Christ, unless he be God?

Indeed, the Apostle proves the deity of our Saviour, from his work of building the church. *For every house is builded by some one; but he that built all things is God,* ver. 5. It is clear that Christ is here meant. For he is immediately spoken of as the builder; and as, on this very account, superior in glory to Moses. It seems to be justly observed by the learned Owen, that τα παντα is put for παντα παντα, *all these things* that the Apostle is presently treating of. That the expression respects the church, is

evident from the use of the word *κατασκευα* formerly applied to the building of the house, and nowhere used in scripture to denote the creation of all things. Unless Christ be meant as the builder, ver. 4. the connexion and force of the argument are lost. For it is not the Apostle's design to compare Moses with God absolutely considered, but to compare him with God-man\*. At any rate, it is undeniable from ver. 3. that the work of building the church belongs to Christ, in a sense in which it cannot be ascribed to any mere servant. Now, the church is *God's building*, 1 Cor. iii. 9. Therefore, Christ is God.

In a word, he is a Son, the faith and knowledge of whom give *perfection* to our nature. Therefore the Apostle says; —*Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man*, Eph. iv. 13. This constitutes the perfection of the whole mystical body of Christ. Either the Socinian expects an higher perfection than what is here described; or, according to his ideas, his highest perfection consists in believing in and knowing a mere man. But the true Christian expects something unspeakably greater. He is satisfied that, in knowing the Son more perfectly, he shall *be filled with all the fulness of God*. But he is also assured that, although his attainments in this respect will far exceed the present, he shall be eternally lost in the greatness of the subject. Therefore the Apostle, in the preceding chapter, ascribes incomprehensibility to the Saviour, when speaking with respect to one perfection only: *That ye—may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God*, ver. 17.—19. He speaks of the love of Christ in the same terms in which Zophar describes the divine nature. The Apostle,

\* Vide Owen in loc. Cameron. Opera, p. 30. Prælect. in Matth.



Apostle, indeed, seems to copy his figurative language : *Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven, what canst thou do? deeper than hell, what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea, Job. xi. 7.—9.*

Before leaving this subject, we may attend to an observation made by Dr P. which he seems to consider as a sufficient reply to every argument that may be urged from the use of this character as applied to our Saviour. Referring to the argument from these passages that exhibit Christ as the *image* of God, he says; “ It is with as little  
“ appearance of reason that Christ is argued to be very and  
“ eternal God, because he is styled *the Son of God*; for all  
“ Christians have the same appellation, 1 John iii. 2. Now  
“ *are we the Sons of God*\*.”

This reply affords a striking proof of the strange inconsistency of Socinians. For it is advanced by the Doctor, after he has granted that Jesus is called *the Son of God* in a peculiar sense, as being *the Christ*, and endeavoured to shew that these terms are perfectly synonymous \*. But as if he questioned whether this ground were tenable, he eventually refuses that peculiarity formerly granted, and secures a more extensive foundation for his batteries against the truth. One would almost think that a Socinian would give you leave to make of *his Saviour* what you please, if you do not plead for his deity. But if Jesus be called *the Son of God* in the same sense as all Christians, he cannot be thus distinguished as Messiah. If so, will the learned writer be pleased to inform us, what was the meaning of our Lord’s testimony, when he assented to the high-priest’s adjuration? Do not professors of Christianity, who *handle the word of God* in this manner, expose themselves to the attacks

\* Fam. Illustr. p. 23.

† Ibid. p. 22.

attacks of infidels? Might not a Deist say, with great appearance of reason; "You first inform us, that your Master is called *the Son of God* as being *the Christ*, that is, he receives this name in a peculiar sense; nay, that he confirmed this sense of the expression by solemn oath. Then you assure us that all Christians have the same appellation. Either you must believe that every Christian is a Messiah, or you believe in none at all."

But to say that all Christians are called *the sons of God*, proves nothing; unless it can be proved that they receive this character in the same sense in which it is given to Jesus. But not even the same language is used. Are they *all* called God's *proper sons*, his *only begotten sons*? With far more propriety might it be said that, because all believers are called *the servants of Christ*, Eph. vi. 6. none receive this name peculiarly and distinctively, as ministers of the gospel, Jude ver. 1. Because magistrates and idols are called *gods*, by a parity of reason the polytheist might deny that the scripture maintains the divine unity. He might plead that it favours heathenism, and that JEHOVAH is a deity in common with others. For his being called *the true God*, *the living God*, *the one God*, might with equal propriety be of as little account with him, as Christ's being called God's *only and only begotten Son* is with a Socinian.

But there is sufficient evidence from the connexion of that very passage quoted by our author, that, while the Apostle uses this character by way of resemblance, he marks a very important distinction. Such a Son is Jesus, that all other sons receive their *anointing*, not merely by, but *from* him, and must continue in him in the same respects as in the Father, 1 John ii. 20. 24.; that whosoever denieth him hath not the Father, ver. 22.; that all other sons must appear before him as their judge, and are begotten of him as their father; ver. 28, 29. Such is the essential



tial dignity of this Son, that it is an ineffable wonder of love that any of Adam's family should be honoured with the same designation; chap. iii. 1. He is a Son manifested for the very purpose of taking away the sins of others, and destroying the works of the devil, ver. 5. 8. and who preserves all that are united to him from falling into condemnation, ver. 6. After all this, had any one said to the Apostle; "You do not mean that this title denotes any essential superiority in Jesus to us, for we also are *all the sons of God*;" there is every reason to believe that he would have pronounced him a bastard, and not a son.

Dr P. subjoins; "We are called not only the *children*, but *the heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ*," Rom. viii. 17. But as the persons who are thus denominated have been once under *the law of sin and death*, ver. 2. and *enmity against God*, ver. 7. the passage cannot prove what the Doctor wishes. Because a rebel was mercifully pardoned by his sovereign, and even admitted to a participation of the honour belonging to him whom the king acknowledged as *his own son, his proper son*, (ver. 3. 32.) would any one therefore plead that the pardoned rebel was as truly and properly the king's son as the other?

To as little purpose is it urged that "Adam is more especially called *the Son of God*, Luke iii. 38." For it is undeniable that he receives this character, because he was *created after* the image of God. But Christ is thus denominated, because he is the very *image of the invisible God, the express image of the Father's person*; not created, but begotten. We are also told that "Ephraim is called *his dear Son*," Jer. xxxi. 20. But there is no connexion here. For it is well known that the Israelites, (who were often called *Ephraim*, to distinguish them from the kingdom of Judah) received this character, because of their ex-  
ternal

ternal relation to God as his peculiar people. Here it may have a special respect to their repentance foretold in the preceding verses. But can Dr P. really mean that this designation, as denoting the Saviour, is to be understood in no higher a sense than when applied to those who have previously been *as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke*, and who have *borne the reproach of their youth?* ver. 19, 20.

B O O K



VINDICATION  
OF THE  
DOCTRINE OF SCRIPTURE, &c.

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BOOK IV.

OF DOCTOR PRIESTLEY'S ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE  
DIVINITY OF CHRIST.

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C H A P. I.

*The first Argument, from what is supposed to be the general  
Tenor of the Scriptures, considered.*

THE Doctor prefaces his objections by a very just observation. "An impartial person," he says, "may easily satisfy himself, that the writers of the books of scripture held the doctrine of *one God*, and that they were understood to do so by those persons for whose use the books were written \*." Here in words at least we perfectly agree with our author. But the foundation of the

Socinian system is laid in the assumption of two falsehoods, as if they had been proved to be indisputable truths; first, that those who hold the doctrine of the Trinity believe in more Gods than one; and secondly, that *one God* must of necessity be *one person* only. The charge of polytheism, however, belongs not to Trinitarians, but to their opponents, who ascribe the perfections and prerogatives of the one God to angels, and to a mere man. It must be obvious to every impartial reader, that on these false grounds the whole of Dr P.'s reasoning against the divinity of our Saviour proceeds.

He grants that the plural number "is made use of, when "God is represented as saying, Gen. i. 26. *Let us make "man."* "But," he adds, "that this is mere phraseology, "is evident from its being said immediately after, in the "singular number, ver. 27. *God created man in his own "image*, so that the creator was still one *being* \*." A plurality of persons in an unity of *being*, is all that we plead for. But nothing will please a Socinian, as a proof of a plurality of persons, that would not prove a plurality of *beings*, that is, of *gods*. He also refers to these words, Gen. xi. 7. *God said, Let us go down, and there confound their language*. His reply to the argument for a plurality from this passage, is equally sage. "But we find, in the very "next verse, that it was one being only who actually effected this." And what Trinitarian ever asserted the contrary? That kind of speaking or writing cannot justly be dignified with the name of *argument*, that proves what has never been doubted by the adverse party. The Doctor ought to have proved, not that one being was the agent in both instances; but that a single person is meant, when the plural number is used, and that he did not address any other person; but *himself*.

Our author goes on in the same important demonstration.

"In

\* Ibid. p. 4.



“ In all the intercourse of God, with Adam, Noah, and the  
 “ other patriarchs, no mention is made of more than one be-  
 “ ing who addressed them under that character. The name  
 “ by which he is distinguished is sometimes *Jehovah*, and at  
 “ other times *the God of Abraham, &c.*” He might also have  
 mentioned that he who calls himself *the God of Abraham*,  
 is called *the Angel of Jehovah*. But this would have given  
 him the trouble of formally answering an objection, which,  
 as has been already seen, he wisely passes over as lightly as  
 possible, when brought in by him, as if merely *en passant*.  
 A wise man will not raise a ghost, which he is not sure that  
 he can lay.

As a proof of the unity of God, in the Socinian sense,  
 the Doctor refers to Deut. vi. 4. But it has been for-  
 merly proved that the ancient Jews, however stedfastly  
 they maintained the doctrine of the divine unity, explained  
 this passage of a plurality of persons\*.

“ The Messiah,” he says, “ is *supposed* to be announced  
 “ to our first parents under the title of *the seed of the wo-*  
 “ *man*, Gen. iii. 15 †.” We hope, the Doctor does not  
 suppose any thing else: however unpalatable this expres-  
 sion may be to him, now that he has discovered that the  
 scriptural doctrine of the miraculous conception has the  
 marks of a “ story inconsistent and ill-digested.” But he  
 has found out a method of getting rid of this singular expres-  
 sion: “ The phrase *born of woman*, which is,” he says,  
 “ of the same import, is always in scripture synonymous to  
 “ *man*.” It is expressly denied that the phrase *born of wo-*  
*man* is of the same import with *the seed of the woman*.  
 There are other passages which contain language of the  
 same import: but it is always so guarded as to shew that  
 an extraordinary, and even an unparalleled event is meant.  
 Thus it is said, Jer. xxxi. 22. *The Lord hath created a new*  
*thing in the earth, A woman shall compass a man.* But was  
 it

\* See above, p. 74.—76.

† Vol. i. p. 8.

it a new thing in the earth, for a man to be born of a woman? It was a sign that JEHOVAH himself was to give, that a virgin should conceive, and bear a son, Isa. vii. 14. If Jesus received his human nature in the ordinary way, the Apostle Paul is chargeable with a mere affectation of singularity, without the least reason, when he says that God sent forth his Son made of a woman, Gal. iv. 3. One of these very texts on which the Doctor leans, for the support of his assertion with respect to the consonancy of the phrases mentioned, proves to him a broken reed which pierces into the very heart of his argument. This is Job xxv. 4. *How can he be clean that is born of a woman?* Because no one born of a woman, according to the ordinary course of nature, can be clean; it was necessary that our high-priest should be separate from sinners in his very conception, and therefore that he should be made of a woman.

Dr P. quotes Deut. xviii. 18. *I will raise them up a prophet, from among their brethren, &c.* adding, with an air of triumph; “Here is nothing like a second person in the Trinity, a person equal to the Father, but a mere prophet, delivering in the name of God, whatever he is ordered so to do \*.” This kind of reasoning would be valid, if the friends of the deity of Christ refused that he sustained any other character than that of a divine person. But on no other supposition does it deserve an answer. Much in the same manner, might those, who never saw David till he was ascending Mount Olivet, weeping, with his head uncovered, and bare-foot, say; “Here is nothing like the King of Israel.” Jesus says to his disciples, *Lo, I am among you as one that serveth.* With equal propriety might it be argued from these words, that he could be in no respect superior to the disciples, because *here is nothing like superiority.* Our author ought to give his argument its due weight. For the words of God by Moses will equally

prove

\* Ibid. p. 9.



prove that Jesus was not to be a priest or a king, as that he was not to be a divine person; because he is not *here* mentioned under any of these characters. But this is not to give *arguments from the tenor of scripture*, but from detached passages, and even without regard to the principal design of these.

It is not fact, that here we have “nothing—but a mere prophet.” It would, indeed, be of no avail to us; were the Saviour revealed in his divine nature only. We would utter the same language as the Israelites, when God spoke to them immediately. They were so afraid of his majesty that they said, *Let not God speak with us, lest we die*, Ex. xx. 19. They wished for one, in their own nature, to mediate between God and them. They proposed Moses: and God declared his assent. But it is evident that he was accepted merely as a temporary mediator, and as a type of one unspeakably fitter for the work. For it was on this very occasion, of the people expressing their desire of a Mediator, that the prophecy under consideration was delivered. In the choice of the occasion, God shewed them, that, in complying with their proposal, he used Moses merely as a type. Therefore, he directed their principal attention to the Antitype, at the very time that it would have been most necessary to have confined their attention to Moses, had he not been employed in an inferior character. Moses himself, well assured of his own inferiority, does not fail to remind the Israelites of the circumstance mentioned. *The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet, from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me, unto him ye shall hearken.* ACCORDING TO ALL THAT THOU DESIREDST of the Lord thy God in Horeb, in the day of the assembly, saying, *Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, neither let me see this great fire any more that I die not.* And the Lord said unto me, *They*

*have well spoken that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a prophet, &c.* The promise of a future revelation of the divine will could have brought no consolation to the affrighted and dejected Israelites, had they not been assured that it should be made by one in human nature. It was impossible, indeed, that he could otherwise accomplish the work of mediation. It was necessary that he should be *taken from among men*, Heb. v. 1. But he is not revealed as “a mere prophet.” His prophetic character, according to which he was to speak the words of God, is mentioned as one branch only of his mediatorial office.

The Doctor asserts that Jesus is here exhibited as a *mere* prophet, most probably, because he is said to be *like unto* Moses. But the word used in the original does not signify so perfect a similitude as admits of no difference. It by no means implies that the persons or things compared agree in all circumstances. It is enough, if they agree in one or more respects in which the comparison is stated. Nor is it necessary, that there should be an exact similarity with respect to degree. This may be greater or less. Sometimes it denotes likeness, where the person or thing compared falls short of that with which it is compared; as in Joel ii. 3. *The land is AS the garden of Eden*; Lam. ii. 13. *Thy breach is great LIKE the sea*. Ως, the Greek word which corresponds to it, is used in the same manner in the New Testament. Mat. v. 48. *Be ye perfect AS your Father in heaven is perfect*. In other places, it marks such a likeness, that the thing compared exceeds the other. Psal. ciii. 13. *LIKE AS a father pitieth his children, the Lord pitieth them that fear him*. But it is undeniable, that his compassion infinitely transcends that of any earthly parent\*.

Thus, when Christ is compared to Moses, it is not meant that they agree in all respects. Nor will it follow that the  
former

\* Vid. Guffetii Comment. in L. Ebraic. in lit. 5.



former does not surpass the latter, even in those respects in which the comparison is instituted. Therefore, when God says to Moses, *I will raise up a prophet—like unto thee*, the expression properly is, *as thou art*. In the New Testament, in both the places where this prediction is quoted, the words are so rendered as to shew that this is their real meaning: Acts iii. 22. vii. 37. *A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, ως εμε, as he raised up me*. The comparison is stated between Moses and the Messiah, with respect to the circumstance of the latter being a prophet, related to those to whom he should be sent, as possessing the same nature with them: which was the very consolation that Israel *desired*. But it by no means follows that they were equal, as to either personal or official dignity. For thus the prophecy would not have been verified in Jesus. For as he is here compared, he is elsewhere contrasted with Moses, John i. 17, 18. *The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ*. They are not merely opposed as to what came by each, but, as we have formerly shewn, with respect to the very manner of its coming. *The law was GIVEN by Moses, but grace and truth, ΕΥΕΛΕΤΟ, were MADE by Jesus Christ*. But they are further contrasted. For it immediately follows; *No man hath seen God at any time*. This seems to be spoken with a special reference to Moses, as shewing that when it is said that God spake with him *face to face*, Ex. xxxiii. 11. it signifies that he was admitted to greater nearness than any other *mere* prophet, but not that he really saw God himself, or had a proper and full display of his glory\*.

That this prophecy declares such a *likeness* as admits of great superiority, is evident from its intention, nay, from the very phraseology. For when it is said, *Unto him ye*

I i 2

*shall*

\* See above, p. 155, 156.

*shall hearken*, the church is prepared for a total change of the dispensation, and informed that she shall then be loosed from Moses, and subjected to the authority of Christ. It is remarkable, that Maimonides explains the following declaration, *Whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my Name, I will require it of him*, by the language of God respecting his Angel, Ex. xxiii. 21. *Beware of him, and obey his voice ; for my Name is in him :* although he views the prophet as distinct from that Angel \*.

Christ is evidently compared with Moses, as the anti-type with the type ; so as to illustrate the great superiority of the former. Moses, indeed, is not the only pattern to which this prophet is likened. Another is mentioned in the same passage. This is *all the desire* of Israel. It would appear that this is principally in view, in the likeness expressed. For when Moses has said, *A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up,—like unto me*, he immediately adds, as if the comparison were too weak, *like unto all that thou hast desired*. For the same term, denoting resemblance, is used in both clauses. It seems to have the same meaning, as if he had said ; “ God will not merely give you a prophet like unto me, but correspondent to the utmost extent of your desires, as expressed by you on that memorable day when you wished no more to hear the appalling voice, or to see the awful fire of the divine Majesty.” God himself testifies peculiar approbation of their language, not because they had proposed Moses as their Mediator, but because they displayed a conviction of their absolute need of one, to convince them of which was the great end of the Law, as being only *a schoolmaster to bring them to Christ*. He testifies his approbation, because it was his special intention, in the whole of that dispensation, to shew them the necessity of such a Mediator as could



could really remove from them that *great fire* of the divine indignation. Therefore, he graciously lays hold of this opportunity of directing their principal attention to Jesus, as that Mediator who alone could *grant them according to their heart, and fulfil all their counsel*; as is said of *the Name* of the God of Jacob, Psal. xx. 4. To the primary occasion of this prediction, there is a beautiful allusion, joined with a declaration of its accomplishment, Heb. xii. 18—24. *Ye are not come unto the mount—that burned with fire,—and the voice of words, which they that heard, intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more;—but ye are come—to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling.* Therefore, with great propriety it is added, in reference to the strict charge concerning this prophet; *See that ye refuse not him that speaketh.*

I shall only add, that while Dr P. denies the deity of Christ, because it is not mentioned in this prophecy, a Jewish friend, to whom he frequently appeals, directly reverses the matter, although from a similar misapprehension of the comparison. He denies that it can apply to Jesus at all, because he declared himself to be God \*.

The Doctor further observes; “ By Isaiah, who writes  
 “ more distinctly concerning the Messiah than any of the  
 “ preceding prophets, his sufferings and death are men-  
 “ tioned, chap. liii. Daniel also speaks of him as to *be cut*  
 “ *off*, chap. ix. 26. But surely these are characters of a  
 “ *man*, and not those of a God †.” Undoubtedly, suffer-  
 ings and death are predicted of him as man; because it  
 was only the human nature that could suffer. But it will  
 not thence follow that he is not God, unless it can be shewn  
 that these are the greatest lines in his character. But both  
 Isaiah and Daniel, in these very passages, shew that it was

\* Nizzachon ap. Owen on Heb. Vol. 1. Ex. 9. p. 99.

† Vol. 1. p. 9.

*not for himself* that he suffered and was *cut off*, and that his sufferings had such efficacy as cannot be ascribed to those of a mere man. For *with his stripes we are healed*, Isa. liii. 5. and in consequence of this, *who shall declare his generation?* ver. 8. Because of his bearing their iniquities, he *justifies many*, ver. 11. He, who is thus the *Redeemer* of his church, is *the holy One of Israel, the God of the whole earth*, whose name is JEHOVAH of hosts, chap. liv 5. The Angel, in the revelation made to Daniel, speaks of the Messiah or *Anointed*, as *the most Holy* previous to his unction. For he was to be *anointed*, or constituted *Messiah* in our nature, by the gifts of the Spirit, as being already, in his divine nature, *the most Holy*, Dan. ix. 24. In being *cut off*, he was to *finish transgression, make an end of sins, make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness*. But perhaps, the real reason why our author so obstinately denies the divine nature of Christ, is that he does not perceive the necessity of that divine work ascribed to him.

As the Doctor proceeds to illustrate the consonancy of the Jewish ideas to the prophecies concerning Christ, we might have looked for a proof, that although they expected a mere man, they were fully satisfied that he should be a *suffering Messiah*. But feeble as our author's system is, it is at war with itself. For he immediately adds; "Accordingly, it appears in the history of our Saviour, that the Jews of his time expected that their Messiah would be a *prince* and a *conqueror*, like David, from whom he was to be descended." What means this *accordingly*? If it mean any thing, it must denote that the expectations of the Jews were *according to* the predictions of Isaiah and Daniel. And how is this proved? Both these prophets, in the passages referred to, described a *suffering Messiah*, a *prince* indeed, but who should be *cut off*. Therefore, the faith of the Jews was perfectly consonant to the revelation, and is



a proper pattern for us: because they expected a *prince* and a *conqueror*, that is, a prince, who instead of being himself *cut off*, should only *cut off* others. The force of this curious reasoning plainly is, that, like the Jews, we should not only deny the *divine*, but the *suffering* character of the Messiah.

It is next objected, that “Christ himself always prayed “to this one God as his God and Father\* The whole strength of this objection lies in a denial of the possibility of a divine person acting the part of a Mediator. For if the Son, in consequence of a voluntary substitution in our stead, assumed human nature, he, in that nature, as a public person, owed all those duties to which we are bound by the law, as far as they could be performed by one free from personal sin, and among the rest, that of prayer. The work of obedience is ascribed to the whole person of the Mediator, because of the hypostatical union: but strictly it belonged to the human nature only. As in this nature alone he could suffer; this only, in proper language, could be the subject of faith, hope, and the other graces that became him in fulfilling all righteousness. Prayer is ascribed to the one Mediator. But it was not properly the act of the divine nature, but of the human, subsisting in his one person. Therefore, he did not pray to the *one God*, as excluding his own divine nature; but either to the Father, œconomically considered as sustaining the honour of deity in the work of redemption; or to God essentially considered, as including each divine person. Thus the Messiah is addressed as God, with respect to his essential dignity, at the very time that God is said to be his God as Mediator, Psal. xlv. 6.—8. *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.—God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness.* What is subjoined, with respect to Christ’s doctrine

\* Ibid. p. 10.

and power, we have fully considered in another part of this work.

The Doctor asserts that “ the Apostles, to the latest period of their writing,—represent the Father as the one true God, and Christ as a man the servant of God who raised him from the dead, and gave him all the power of which he is possessed, as the reward of his obedience\*.” In proof of this bold assertion, he refers to Acts ii. 22. which we have elsewhere considered. He also quotes, 1 Tim. ii. 5. and Heb. ii. 9. in support of his doctrine. But when it is said, *There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus*, it is not meant to confine the deity to the Father, or to assert that the Mediator is mere man. For the evident design of the passage is to exhibit God, not in his essential, but in his economical character, as *our Saviour*, ver. 3. and to shew that it is his will that some of all orders of men, (ver. 2.) should be *saved and come to the knowledge of the truth*, ver. 4. Therefore, he points out the only way of being *saved*, and that *truth* which it is indispensably necessary to *know*. This is the way of mediation, which he shews is necessarily one, by reason of the unity of the divine nature. For we cannot suppose that there are more ways of mediation than one, without supposing, as the heathen did, a multiplicity of gods, who must be appeased one in one way, and another in another. As the most convincing proof of it being the *will* of God *to save* men, it is declared that a Mediator is provided in their own nature. In this respect it hath never been denied that he is inferior. But must it thence be inferred that he is nothing more than man? The work ascribed to him, in the words immediately following, proves the contrary. For he *gave himself a ransom for all*. But had he been a mere creature, he could have had no power to *give himself* for others, and his gift would have been of no avail.

\* Ibid. p. 10.



avail. For the utmost that a creature can do, he owes to the law for himself.

Because it is said, 1 Cor. viii. 6. *To us there is but—one Lord Jesus Christ*, it might with equal propriety be argued that the Father is excluded from all *dominion*, as that the Son is here excluded from deity, because it is said, *There is one God*. It is as easy to conceive that the Son should be God in one respect, and the Mediator between God and men in another, as that God should *reconcile us to himself*, 2 Cor. v. 18. which language undoubtedly signifies that he employs means for this end; that although the offended party, he acts the part of a conciliator.

As to Heb. ii. 9. Christ was indeed *made a little lower than the angels*. But it is vain for our author to believe this, while he rejects the description given of him in the preceding chapter, as infinitely higher than the angels, by virtue of his eternal Sonship. However, although he should pay as little regard to the first chapter of this epistle as he does to the first chapter of Luke, the very passage quoted might convince him, that the person spoken of previously existed in a higher character. For it is declared that he was *MADE a little lower,—FOR the suffering of death*. Now, Dr P. must grant either that God's great end in *making* man, is to subject him to suffering and death; or that Jesus, as essentially possessing a higher nature, was, by an extraordinary act, clothed with the human, for a special end, in the accomplishment of which he had no equal. And what was this? It is declared in the very verse referred to,—*that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man*.

The Doctor inquires, “Why was not the doctrine of the *trinity* taught as explicitly, and in as definite a manner in the New Testament at least, as the doctrine of “the *divine unity* is taught in both the Old and New Testaments,

“taments, if it be a truth \*?” The great design of God, in both Testaments, is to declare his nature and perfections, not abstractly, but as manifested in his operations, and especially in the work of our redemption. If, therefore, names, attributes, works and worship, proper to God only, are ascribed to distinct persons, although one or more of these be generally described as sent, it is sufficiently clear that they must be divine. If notwithstanding these essential characters, we deny their deity because of their economical relations, our guilt is greatly aggravated. For we refuse to know God in the most amiable, benevolent and useful character in which he could discover himself. The personal Wisdom of God, to degrade whom it is our author’s great work, gives a short but striking reply to such questions: *All the words of my mouth are—plain to him that understandeth.* And again, *A scorner seeketh wisdom, and findeth it not: but knowledge is easy to him that understandeth,* Prov. viii. 8, 9.; xiv. 6.

Dr P. adds, “Why is the doctrine of the unity always delivered in so unguarded a manner, and without any exception in favour of a Trinity, to prevent any mistake with respect to it, as is always now done in our orthodox catechisms, creeds, and discourses on the subject?” God hath not thought fit to lay down a connected system of truth. He requires it as an act of homage which we owe to him, that we search the scriptures, and compare spiritual things with spiritual, that we may discern his will. This holds with respect to all the doctrines of revelation. But, indeed, in some texts the doctrine of a Trinity in unity is as clearly declared as ever it was in any human creed. But what does this avail? Either the plain meaning of words is denied; or by the help of a manuscript or two, we are entirely deprived of the text. The institution of Baptism, which is a solemn act of worship, contains

\* Ibid. p. 12.



tains as *unguarded* a declaration of the *Trinity*, to use the Doctor's own language, as any one respecting the *unity*. As these orthodox creeds, &c. contain the faith of by far the greatest part of Christians, they clearly shew that, according to the common sense of the Christian world, the doctrine of a Trinity of persons is as plainly declared as that of unity of essence.

Our author, in different parts of his work, appeals to Deut. vi. 4. undoubtedly considering it as one of the most *guarded* expressions of the *unity*. But will he be pleased to inform us, why in this passage two divine names are introduced, and one of these twice; why *Jehovah* is said to be *one Jehovah*; when the Doctor must be conscious that the unity, according to his view of it, would have been better guarded, had *Jehovah* been said to be *one person*, or simply *one*; and why one of the names is given in the *plural*, when this circumstance evidently tends, in the most direct manner, to convey the idea of *plurality*? If, as is allowed on all hands, one great design of the Jewish dispensation was to preserve the doctrine of the divine unity, amidst the corruption of surrounding heathens; if, as is equally certain, the Jews themselves were greatly addicted to idolatry, and eager to embrace the slightest pretence for polytheism; can any satisfactory reason be imagined for the frequent use of this plural expression, and especially in the proclamation of the unity, without supposing a necessity for it from the nature of God, as implying a plurality in unity? Have we not every reason to believe that, otherwise, it would have been carefully avoided on every occasion, and especially on this; lest it might prove a snare, or be pleaded as a pretence, if not for the worship of *more Jehovahs*, at least for the worship of *more persons* than one, that is, according to the Socinian hypothesis, of *more Gods*?

The Doctor seems determined, like his worthy friends  
the

the Jews, to charge Jesus with the character of a *deceiver*, considering the manner in which he expressed himself, if he entertained the idea of equality with the Father. His words, indeed, fill the mind with horror. “It would be a shocking abuse of language,” he says, “and would warrant any kind of *deception* and *imposition*, if Christ could be supposed to say, that *his Father was greater than he* \*, and yet secretly mean his *human nature* only, while his divine nature was at the same time, fully equal to that of the Father †.” Our author does not seem well acquainted with the very principles that he opposes. For it is not said that Christ means his *human nature only*, but his mediatory character in general. He could not be said *secretly* to mean this, unless he had never made himself known to his disciples in any higher character. Believing his equality with the Father as God, we could not charge him with a *secret* meaning, not to mention the blasphemous idea of *deception*, although he had not here proclaimed his superior nature; as he had done it on many former occasions. But indeed he had particularly declared this equality in the preceding discourse. He had reproved Philip and the other disciples, because they had not sufficiently clear ideas of it; and taught them, not only that *the Father was in him*, but *he in the Father*, and that in seeing him, they had *seen the Father*, ver. 9.—14. He had referred them to the great event of the effusion of the Spirit, for a more distinct knowledge and steadfast faith of this important truth, ver. 20. *At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father*. But as the occasion of these declarations, was his telling them that he was to go from them; as this expression stumbled their minds, because it seemed inconsistent with what he had already said, and to imply inferiority, he at length proceeds to show that his *going to the Father*

\* John xiv. 28.

† Ibid. p. 15.



was really in an inferior character, as his mediatory servant, and their forerunner. Is there any secret *meaning* here? Not those who believe, but those who deny the deity of Christ, ascribe a secret meaning to him. For when he says that the *Son of man hath power to forgive sins*, our author maintains he could only mean that he had power to *declare* forgiveness. When he says, *Where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them*, Dr P. asserts, that he could only mean to represent the power of the disciples with God. When Jesus testifies that he was *before Abraham*, we are assured that “his meaning clearly is, that Abraham *foresaw*, and of consequence, was *before him* \*.” When he says, *I and the Father are one*, we are taught that his meaning was, that they were *one* in intention only; not in power, in purpose, in essence, or in any of these respects which the term most naturally implies, especially according to its connexion, and in which it was understood by those who heard him.

The Doctor’s reasoning from the conduct of the apostles, as narrated in the Acts, has been formerly examined. He exhibits the same argument in another form. “Least of all would Christ have been considered as a man in *reasoning*, and *argumentation*, though his external appearance should have so far put men off their guard, as to have led them to give him that appellation. Had the Apostle Paul considered Christ as being any thing more than a man, with respect to his nature, he could never have urged with the least propriety or effect, that, *as by man came death, so by man came also the resurrection of the dead* †. For it might have been unanswerably replied, This is not the case; for indeed, by man comes death, but not by man, but by God or the *Creator of man*, under God, comes the resurrection of the dead ‡.” No one who understood the design of the Apostle’s reasoning—although fully per-

suaded

\* Famil. Illustr. p. 22. 26. 42.

† Cor. xv. 21.

‡ Vol. i. p. 19.

suaded of the divinity of our Saviour, would have given such an answer. For in these words, the Apostle does not mean to declare by what *power* the resurrection is accomplished, but in what *manner* this blessing is conveyed to us, and the *certainty* of this conveyance. For the whole preceding argument, 1 Cor. xv. 4.—20. is designed to shew that the resurrection of Christ is the great proof of this doctrine. Therefore, the different appearances he made, after his resurrection, are particularly enumerated. In what sense it is said, *By man came the resurrection*, is undeniable from the verse immediately preceding; *But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept*; and also from the verse immediately following: *But every man in his own order, Christ the first fruits, &c.* It would have been no *unanswerable* argument to the Apostle's assertion, supposing him to have believed the divinity of Christ, to have said, that the resurrection came not *by man*, but *by God*; unless the Apostle had denied the reality of Christ's human nature. For the truth of his divinity can be no argument against the truth of his humanity.

When, in the same chapter, the Apostle proceeds to declare the *power* by which the resurrection is accomplished, although he ascribes it to Christ, he speaks of him in different terms. He calls him a *quickening spirit*, ver. 45. because he raises the dead; and *the Lord from heaven*, ver. 47.

The Doctor thus proceeds in his reasoning: "It must  
 " strike every one who gives the least attention to the  
 " phraseology of the New Testament, that the terms *Christ*  
 " and *God*, are perpetually used in contradistinction to each  
 " other, as much as *God* and *man*; and if we attend ever  
 " so little to the theory of language, and the natural use of  
 " words, we shall be satisfied that this would not have been  
 " the case, if the former could have been predicated of the  
 " latter,



“latter, that is, if Christ had been God.” *Christ* and *God* are used as distinct terms; but not in-contradistinction, as denoting diversity of nature, far less as contradistinguished in the degree asserted. For if this were the case, not one of these terms would ever be applied to both persons; nor would the work denoted by either, as essential to that person to whom the term belongs, be ascribed to the other. It is not said that the Father is ever called *Christ*. But it is evident that Christ is often called *God*. *The Word was God.—Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.* That Jesus is meant in both places, hath been already proved. The very term *Christ*, although a name of office, implies that the person to whom it belongs is essentially divine. For he is *anointed* with the Spirit *without measure*. And can this be asserted of a creature? He is anointed as *the most Holy*, Dan. ix. 24. And can this designation belong to a man naturally as much exposed to sin as we are? He is anointed, as the begotten Son of God, Psal. ii. Therefore, to say that “the terms *Christ* and *God* are as much contradistinguished as *God* and *man*,” is to *imagine a vain thing, in plotting against the Lord and his Anointed*. Only substitute the word *man* for *Christ* in many places of the New Testament, and observe what a *pleasant* effect it will have, as to the faith and consolation of Christians! *Baptising them in the name of the Father*, that is, of God, and of A MAN, and of the Holy Ghost.—*The grace of MAN, and the love of God, be with you. Paul, an Apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by A FREE MAN, and God the Father, &c.*

He further observes: “We say *the prince and the king*, “because the prince is not the king.” This is true in human concerns. But it does not apply here. For royalty is as essential to the Son as to the Father. He is *the fellow of* JEHOVAH of hosts. If he had not been really in the state of God, how could he have *emptied himself*? Can a person  
empty

empty himself of that which he never possessed; nay, from which he hath still been infinitely removed? This analogical argument goes beyond the mark. If it prove any thing, it proves that Christ is *not* *a king*. Does our author really mean to assert this? It would only be a completion of his work. I do not wonder that those who say, *How can this man save us?* should be unwilling to submit to his government. This kind of language reminds one of the ungracious reply of the churlish Nabal, concerning the type; *Who is David? and who is the son of Jesse? there be many servants now a-days that break away every man from his master,* 1 Sam. xxv. 10.

Paul indeed “says that the church at Corinth was *Christ’s*, “and that Christ is *God’s*.” But it will not follow, that “he could have no idea of Christ being God, in any proper “sense of the word.” For in this assertion the Doctor still supposes what he has not proved, that it is impossible for him who *humbleth himself to behold the things that are done in heaven, and on earth*, to humble himself so far as to *take upon him the form of a servant*. The Apostle had certainly no idea that the church was a *man’s*.

## C H A P. II.

*An examination of the Argument against the Divinity of Christ, from the pretended Difficulty of tracing the Time when it was first divulged.*

THE Doctor’s nicely-constructed chain of reasoning from the supposable *surprise*, and *doubt*, and *hesitation*, and *speculation*, and *debate*, which must have been occasioned by the first preaching of the divinity of the Son \*, falls

\* Ibid. p. 23, 24.



falls entirely to pieces, in consequence of what has been formerly proved, that the ancient Jews believed a plurality of persons in the divine essence, and that the first preachers of the Gospel really exhibited Jesus as a divine person.

He further asserts, that “ it cannot be said that John Baptist preached any such doctrine \*.” But that this was the great article of his testimony concerning Jesus, we have also shewn.

On the same subject of our Saviour’s deity he proposes this question ; “ If it had ever been known to Peter, can we “ suppose that he could have denied him as he did † ?” Might not any infidel plead as strongly, from this circumstance, against Christ being the Messiah? Might it not be said, Had Peter believed he was the Saviour of the world, and as himself afterwards declares, that there was *not salvation in any other*, “ can we suppose that he would have denied “ him as he did?” It is not easy to say, how far a person may go under the power of temptation. Our author himself, as he informs us, was once “ a Trinitarian, and prayed “ conscientiously to the three persons without distinction,— “ in the serious simplicity of his heart,—impressed with a “ full persuasion that all the three persons were fully equal “ in all divine attributes ‡.” Doubtless, he then thought that his persuasion was founded on as good a ground as any that Peter could have, the word of God *who cannot lie* : and had any one told him that he would afterwards *deny* the second Person, and do his utmost to prove that he was a mere man, he might have been apt to reply, with the same Peter, *Lord, though all men should be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended* ; or, in the words of Hazeael to the prophet, *Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing ?* 2 Kin. viii. 13. We would rejoice to

Vol. I.

K k

hear

\* Vol. I. p. 25.

† Ibid. p. 27.

‡ Ibid. p. 41.

hear that, like Peter, our author had also *wept bitterly* because of his denial.

He endeavours, by a very curious *manœuvre*, to avert the force of the confession of Thomas. “If it be supposed,” he says, “that Thomas was acquainted with this most extraordinary part of his Master’s character, which led him to cry, *My Lord and my God*\*, when he was convinced of his resurrection, as he was not one of the *three* who had been entrusted with any *secrets*, it must have been known to all the *twelve*, and to Judas Iscariot among the rest. And suppose him to have known, and to have believed, that Jesus was his *God* and *Maker*, was it possible for him, or for any man, to have formed a deliberate purpose to betray him ;—or if he had only heard of the pretension, and had not believed it, would he not have made some advantage of that imposition, and have made the discovery of this, as well as of every thing else that he knew to his prejudice? †” Some things are so weak as scarcely to deserve, or even to admit of an answer. One inference, however, natively occurs from the reasoning both in this, and in the preceding quotation ;—that the doctrine of Socinians, according to their own confession, tends greatly to relax the influence of faith in Christ, and to render the adherence of the soul to him extremely feeble. It must necessarily make men bad martyrs ; still presenting a temptation to apostacy. For our author does not seem to think it near so great a crime to deny *Christ*, as to deny *God*. The most that can be said in favour of suffering for the Saviour, is, that it is *daring to die for a good man*.

It was certainly as possible for Judas to betray his God, as his Saviour. He could have done neither, had he really believed the truth, either of Christ’s divinity, or of his mediatory character. But whatever faith he had, was dead.

He

\* John xx. 28.

† Ibid. p. 27, 28.



He had no *God* but *Mammon*. He sought no *salvation*, but what came from *the bag*. Besides, Satan had *entered into his heart*. With the same propriety, therefore, might it be asked, “Is it possible for Satan to carry on a constant war against God, to whom he, as a creature, owes his being?” But, perhaps, the Doctor may decline to meet me on this ground, as the existence of the devil seems to be no article in his creed. It is questionable, if he believes him to be even an *occasional* being. “Whatever,” he says, “is ascribed to this being will appear, if we consider the circumstances of the several narrations, to be derived from nothing but the irregular passions of men, which are, of themselves, a cause adequate to the effect\*.” Like the description of *Wisdom* in the book of Proverbs, all is *allegory*! But does not the learned Gentleman deserve our thanks for his generosity? As he bereaves us of that gracious Angel who is able to *save*, he endeavours to rid us of that evil one, who has been generally viewed as the instrument in *punishing*.

As little, surely, can be inferred, against the deity of Christ, from the silence of Judas on this article, as against his Messiahship; because we have no evidence that he criminated our Saviour with respect to this. Such filly negative evidence, from the treason or silence of one disciple, can be no argument against the express testimony of another. The amount of this reasoning is; “Because we know the treason of a false disciple, we must reject the confession of a true one. Because Judas says nothing with respect to the divinity of Christ, we are not to believe Thomas in what he does say.”

I shall only add that the perfect harmony between the reasoning of Dr P. on this occasion, and that of the infidel Jew in Celsus, must strike every one who is acquainted

with the work of Origen in reply to him. Their arrows, equally pointed against divine truth, are so much alike, that one would think they had been drawn from the same quiver. "How can we reckon him God," does he say, "who  
 "—was basely taken, being betrayed by those whom he  
 "called his disciples?—Did it become him who was ac-  
 "counted the Saviour, and the Son of God most high, and  
 "his messenger, to be betrayed and delivered up by his  
 "familiar friends," &c \*. There is this difference, however, that the *heathen* philosopher had penetration enough to observe that the argument was of equal force against Jesus being the Messiah, and therefore, against the whole of the Christian revelation.

The Doctor, in another work, comes a little closer to the point. Of the words of Thomas he says; "This is an  
 "abrupt exclamation, and no connected sentence at all, and  
 "seems to have proceeded from a conviction, suddenly pro-  
 "duced in the Apostle's mind, that he who stood before  
 "him was, indeed, his Lord and Master raised to life by  
 "the power of God. The resurrection of Christ and the  
 "power of God, had so near a connexion, that a convic-  
 "tion of the one could not but be attended with an ac-  
 "knowledgment of the other †." When he calls the con-  
 fession of Thomas "an abrupt exclamation," he insinuates nearly the same thing with those who have supposed the language of the Apostle to be equivalent to one of these un-  
 meaning and irreverent addresses, so commonly made, in our time, to the Majesty of heaven; such as, *God bless me!*  
*Good-God!* &c. His words evidently express admiration and surprise, perhaps immediately excited by the discovery Jesus made of his having heard his language to the disciples, although not present as to his human nature; nor, as Thomas might be fully assured, informed by them, none of  
 them

\* Origin cont. Cels. lib. 2. p. 62.

† Famil. Illustr. p. 33.



them having seen Jesus since Thomas had proclaimed his obstinacy in unbelief. According to this supposition, the confession of Thomas was, as to its immediate occasion, similar to that of Nathanael, when Jesus declared that he had seen him under the fig-tree, John i. 48, 49.: although both must be ultimately referred to the divine power of Jesus influencing the heart. For *no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.*

The words of Thomas form as *connected a sentence* as the occasion required. It is connected in its parts. For the particle *and* connects the first part of the address with the second; necessarily referring both to one person. It is connected with what our Lord had said. For the Spirit declares it to be the answer of Thomas; *Then Thomas answered.* The whole is addressed to Jesus: *Thomas answered and said unto him.* It must be admitted that the whole sentence was addressed to Christ, or denied that any of it was so. For, if there be any meaning in language, these words, *said unto him*, must denote that Jesus is the object of the last, as well as of the first part of the address. He not only *answered and said unto him, My Lord*; but he *answered and said unto him, My God.* Little connexion as our author finds in these words, he takes care not to strengthen it by his explanation. To say that Thomas referred to the power of God, is introducing a new subject without the slightest ground from the passage; nay, in direct opposition to the very language of inspiration. Here we beg leave to remind the author of his own words: “There is no use in language, “nor any guard against deception, if such liberties as these “are to be allowed\*.”

He proceeds to reason in this manner: “If the doctrine “of the divinity of Christ had been actually preached by “the Apostles, and the Jewish converts in general had

\* Vol. i. p. 15.

“ adopted it, it could not but have been well known to the  
 “ unbelieving Jews. And would they, who were at that  
 “ time, and have been ever since, so exceedingly zealous  
 “ with respect to the doctrine of the divine unity, not have  
 “ taken the alarm, and have urged this objection to Christi-  
 “ anity, as teaching the belief of more Gods than one, in  
 “ the Apostolic age? And yet no trace of any thing of  
 “ this nature can be perceived in the whole history of the  
 “ book of Acts, or any where else in the New Testament\*.”

But all this reasoning proceeds on a supposition, the falsity of which we have already proved, that the Jews had no notion of a plurality of divine persons. We have seen that, during Christ's ministrations, they often accused him as a blasphemer, for *making himself equal with God*, by calling God *his own Father*; and that at length they condemned him on this very ground. Such a construction of our Saviour's language could never have occurred to them, had they not had some idea of God having a *proper Son*, equal with himself. They could not therefore accuse the Apostles on this head, without criminating the national, traditionary and revealed faith. We know that bitter enemies lay hold of every expression that can by any means be constructed to the prejudice of those whom they oppose. But “ it could  
 “ not but have been well known to the unbelieving Jews,” that the Apostles ascribed the *pouring out of the Spirit* to Jesus, Acts ii. 17. 23. that they proclaimed *salvation* to those who *called on his name*, ver. 21. asserted that it was *not possible that he could be holden of death*, ver. 24. described him as *Lord*, and as *sitting at the right hand of JEHOVAH*, ver. 34. as the object of faith, ver. 38: as *the holy One, the just One, the Author of life*, chap. iii. 14, 15: ascribed infinite *power* to his *Name*, ver. 16. and declared his power to *bless* them, in *turning every one of them from their iniquities*,

\* Ibid. p. 29, 30.



*iniquities*, ver. 26. They had affirmed to the very rulers, that there was *not salvation in any other*, chap. iv. 12. and that it belonged to him to *give repentance and forgiveness*, chap. v. 31. &c \*. The least that can be supposed, is, that their enemies were convinced, that they ascribed to Jesus those characters which their church and nation had always ascribed to the true God. When, therefore, we do not find the least reflection on these doctrines as blasphemy, the argument is much stronger against the Doctor than for him. 'For it is impossible to conceive, that they should not have exhibited this charge against the Apostles, had they not been secretly convinced that they ascribed no more to Jesus than what their own scriptures ascribed to the Angel of the covenant. Therefore, they do not venture to blame the ministers of Jesus for giving too much honour to the Son of God, whom they proclaimed as the Messiah; but for teaching that a man, whom they had crucified, was he: just as they had accused and condemned Jesus, not for saying, as they understood his language, that the Father had a *proper* Son, equal with himself; but because he, *being a man*, and as they apprehended, nothing more, made himself equal with God.

It may be thought that this does not remove the difficulty, because, as the Doctor observes, "as soon as ever" the Jews had any pretence for it, we find them sufficiently quick and vehement in urging this their great objection to Christianity." This was not originally their great objection; for as we have seen, they had sufficient pretence for it from the beginning of the Baptist's ministry. They may now make this pretence. But they did not at first reject Jesus, because too much was ascribed to him in a spiritual respect, but because too little was ascribed to him in a carnal. The Spirit of God expressly informs us

K k 4

that

\* See above, Book II. chap. 11.

that the *stumbling-block* of the Jews was the cross. Their unbelief was foretold as what would turn on this very hinge. *He shall grow up—as a root out of a dry ground : he hath no form nor comeliness ; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men,* Isa. liii. 2, 3. The want of external form, that is, of worldly greatness, is evidently assigned as the reason of rejection. While our Lord was on earth, they never objected to the application of these words to the Messiah ; *The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand.*

But it is undeniable that, since the rejection of that people by God, they have become far darker in all their apprehensions with respect to revealed truth ; and finding that the Christians argued from their concessions and interpretations of Scripture, have either renounced or obscured some of their more ancient doctrines. We need not wonder that this should be the case in regard to the doctrine of a plurality, when it is undeniable that many passages, which their more ancient interpreters applied to the Messiah, have, in later times, from their hatred of Christianity, been almost universally denied to have any such meaning. To refer to that only which has been quoted above from Psal. cx. ; had it not been the established opinion of the Jews, during our Saviour's abode on earth, that these words respected the Messiah, we cannot conceive that the Pharisees should have been so *puzzled*, as our author says, to give a proper answer. Yet by the time that Justin Martyr wrote, they had so accommodated their religious system to their necessities, that it was generally denied that this passage had any such reference. For he asserts, in his Dialogue with a Jew, that the Rabbies “ presumed to apply it to “ Hezekiah \*.”

An

\* Dial p. 409.



An observation brings up the rear of this section, which, according to the first principles laid down by the Doctor himself, gives an unlucky stroke to the whole of the foregoing hypothesis : “ It is really something extraordinary,” he says, “ that this opinion, that Christ was the medium of  
“ all the divine communications to mankind under the  
“ Old Testament Dispensation, should have been *so readily*  
“ *received*, and have *spread so generally as it did among*  
“ Christians, when it not only has no countenance from  
“ Scripture, but is expressly contradicted by the author of  
“ the epistle to the Hebrews \*.” Were the last part of this assertion true, or in other words, were there any truth in what Dr P. has taken so much trouble to prove, that such an idea was never entertained before, or in, the apostolic age ; the circumstance mentioned would be *really extraordinary*. For, as the Christian church received all her doctrines by means of Jewish converts, who are supposed to have been such firm believers in the divine *unity*, according to the Socinian sense ; she must have been as fully established in the belief of the mere humanity of Jesus, as in that of his being Messiah. Now, let our author apply his own principles. As all the first Christians firmly believed that their Messiah was a mere man, that there was but one person in the divine essence, and that any other doctrine was heathenish polytheism and idolatry ; “ the doctrine of Christ’s having had any exist-  
“ ence or sphere of action, before he came into the world  
“ (as that of his having been *the medium of all divine com-*  
“ *munications* to the patriarchs, and especially the doctrine  
“ of his being equal to God the Father himself) must have  
“ been *new and extraordinary* doctrines,—must have been  
“ first heard with great *surprise*, probably received with  
“ some *doubt and hesitation*, and could not but excite much  
“ *speculation*

\* Vol. i. p. 34.

“ *speculation and debate :*” for “ these are *always* the consequences of the promulgation of new and extraordinary opinions, the minds of men not having been previously prepared to receive them \*.” Yet our author acknowledges that this very opinion, “ that Christ was *the medium of all divine communications* to mankind, during the Old Testament, this *new and extraordinary* doctrine, was *readily received, and spread generally among Christians.*” This is *really something extraordinary*, and must undoubtedly be considered as not entirely reconcileable to the Doctor’s *twelfth* Maxim of Historical Criticism; that “ great changes in opinion are not usually made of a sudden, and *never* by great bodies of men †.” The Doctor may also please to apply the sixteenth Maxim, which although not meant to be applied in this manner, answers as well as if it had been framed for the purpose. “ When a time is given, in which any very remarkable and interesting opinion was not believed by a certain class of people, and another time in which the belief of it was *general*, the introduction of such an opinion may always be known by the effects which it will produce upon the minds, and in the conduct of men; by the *alarm* which it will give to some, and the defence of it by others. ‘ If, therefore, *no alarm was given*, and no defence of it was made within any particular period, it may be concluded that the introduction of it did not take place within that period ‡.”

But he leaves this circumstance just as *extraordinary* as he found it. And for a very good reason. It is a bar in his way, which he may overleap, but cannot remove. He perceives, that it is impossible to account for this fact, even when he has the choice of his principles. It directly opposes them. It is, indeed, absolutely incredible, that the doctrine

\* Ibid. p. 23, 24.

† Vol. iv. p. 300.

‡ Ibid. p. 301, 302.



doctrine referred to should have been so *generally received* in the second century, unless it had really been the doctrine of the first.

Thus, *the Difficulty of tracing the time in which the doctrine of the Divinity of Christ was first divulged*; instead of being an *argument* which, as our author says, “concludes very strongly against” the truth of this doctrine, eventually proves an insurmountable objection to the truth of his own. That it was *divulged* some time or other, cannot be denied. But as he cannot discern any of these appearances which “are *always* the consequence of the promulgation of a new and extraordinary doctrine;” it must follow, that even at the time that he fixes for its promulgation, it was not accounted either *new* or *extraordinary*.

But insolvable as he finds this difficulty upon philosophical, historical, or critical principles; the good man tries it by those of Scripture. This is somewhat out of his ordinary line; as he very seldom prefers faith to philosophy. But such a deviation might be necessary on an *extraordinary* occasion. Although he reckons the *reasoning* of the Apostle Paul often *inconclusive*, he is willing to be indebted to him, when he finds that his own is more so. He is satisfied that this doctrine “is expressly contradicted by the author of the epistle to the Hebrews, in Heb. i. 1. God who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken unto us by his Son. Again, chap. ii. 2, 3. If the word spoken by angels was stedfast, &c. how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord. What can be more evident,” does he say, “than that the writer of this epistle had no idea of God having spoken to mankind by his Son before the time of the gospel \*?” The Doctor, by introducing the first passage as opposed to the orthodox system,

system, shews how little he attends even to its first principles. It is supposed, indeed, that all the appearances, made by God, under the Old Testament, were in the second Person; and affirmed that the Spirit who was in the prophets acted as *the Spirit of Christ*, being sent by him. But we know of none who have supposed that, in these respects, the Son acted absolutely, or merely as the second Person. As the order of operation corresponds to the order of subsistence, this holds not only in all the essential, but in all the œconomical works of God. The contrivance of redemption, and the mission of the second Person, as Mediator, being immediately ascribed to the Father, all the communications that have been made to the church, are viewed as revelations of what is primarily, though not exclusively, *his* will. Therefore, when it is urged that the second Person appeared under the Old Testament, it is always understood that he acted as the Messenger of the Father, in consequence of his own voluntary engagement in the everlasting covenant.

It is granted that the Father is meant, in this place, by the term *God*. But when it is said that he *spoke by the prophets*, it is not the intention of the inspired writer to deny that the Son acted the part of a federal Messenger between the Father and the prophets, in communicating his will to them by his Spirit. For the only opposition here stated, is between those who *immediately* communicated the will of God under the different dispensations. The Father is said to have spoken, under the Old Testament, *by the prophets*; because they were the immediate instruments of delivering his will to the church. But it is declared that, *in these last times he hath spoken—by the Son*; because the *great salvation began to be spoken by the Lord himself*.

By



By a parity of reason, our author might plead that this language, *spake by the prophets*, “shews that “the writer “had no idea that God on any occasion spake to mankind” by any other instruments than the prophets, “before the “time of the gospel.” But the very text brought in as another proof of the Doctor’s assertion, shews that others were employed. For the law is called *the word spoken by angels*, because of their being used as instruments in producing the lightnings, thunderings, earthquake, sound of a trumpet, and voice of words in which it was expressed. Thence this law is said to have been *ordained by angels*, and *given by the disposition of angels*. But God the Father did not employ them immediately. The Son acted as *Angel of the covenant*, using them as ministring spirits between himself and the people of Israel. In this sense alone can we understand what is said by Stephen, when giving an account of Moses; *This is he who was in the church in the wilderness, with the Angel who spake to him in the Mount Sinai*, Acts vii. 38. This, as we have formerly proved, could be no other than that Angel who afterwards informed the Israelites that he had sworn unto their fathers, saying, *I will never break my covenant with you*, Judg. ii. 1. This was a divine Person, although in the character of a messenger; the very same who was afterwards *made flesh*. For he who ascended is the same who descended on Mount Sinai, and was there in the midst of his angelic hosts, Psal. lxxviii. 17, 18. But our author is not entirely satisfied; notwithstanding the abundant supply borrowed from an inspired writer, when analogical reasoning, historical criticism, and supposition itself have failed him. He ventures another throw at the old game; and it is his last. “To “the Jews, however,” he says, “the Arian doctrine must “have been more *novel* than that of the orthodox Christians in the time of Justin Martyr, and therefore, would “probably

“ probably have been received with more surprize.” The Doctor has found himself under a necessity of acknowledging that the promulgation of the orthodox system was not attended with any of these circumstances, which “ are “ *always* the consequence of a new and extraordinary doctrine,” and he attempts to account for this *extraordinary* fact, by asserting that, as the orthodox system preceded the Arian, it would not be so *surprizing*, that is, so obnoxious to the Jews as the latter would have been.

But I cannot perceive that he has any ground for this assertion. Not only does Dr P. himself consider, but he endeavours to shew that the Jews “ consider three persons “ as three Gods, and that this tritheism shocks them \*.” While, therefore, it is granted that, in the time of Justin Martyr, the Son was held to be a distinct person from the Father; according to the principles ascribed to the Jews, they must have considered him as a *distinct God*, as much as the idol of the Arians. Indeed, it would seem that, according to the Doctor’s own account of the Jewish faith, the Arian doctrine would have occasioned *less* surprize. For he has formerly asserted that “ angels speak in the name of “ God †;” and he doubtless adopts this opinion as perfectly agreeable to the Jewish theology. It is also mentioned as a Jewish idea, that “ God spake to angels, when he said, “ *Let us make man ‡.*” If therefore, according to them, angels might be of God’s counsel in the work of creation, and speak in the name, nay, as representing the very person of *Jehovah*, while the divine unity remained uninjured; it could only be carrying the matter a little farther to suppose a supereminent angel, or even a superangelic being to be created by God, and to be employed as his instrument in creating the rest of his works. Our author does not reckon even the latter supposition repugnant to reason, or inimical to the divine unity. For “ God,” he says, “ *might* “ *have*

\* Vol. iii. p. 37.

† Vol. i. p. 5.

‡ Vol. iii. p. 27.



“ *have* created one being of such extraordinary power, as  
 “ should make it unnecessary for him to exert any more  
 “ creative power; so that all that remained of creation  
 “ might be delegated to that great derived being\*.” Now,  
 if our author, in perfect consistence with Unitarian principles, can form such a supposition, he cannot refuse that the Jews, referred to, might have done the same; unless he means to grant that he has not such strict ideas of divine unity as they had.

### C H A P. III.

*A consideration of the Argument against the Divinity of Christ from his not being the Object of Prayer.*

“ **O** U R Saviour himself,” Dr P. observes, “ always  
 “ prayed to his Father, and with as much humility  
 “ and resignation as the most dependent being in the uni-  
 “ verse could possibly do; always addressing him as *his*  
 “ *Father*, or the author of his being; and he directs his dis-  
 “ ciples to pray to the same Great Being, *whom only*, he  
 “ says, *we ought to serve* †.” We have already spoken of  
 Christ’s praying. But we would wish to know from the  
 learned Gentleman, if such language as that, *Father, I will*,  
 (John xvii. 24.) become “ the most dependent being in the  
 “ universe?” Jesus indeed addresses God as *his Father*:  
 and it may be admitted that God the Father was the au-  
 thor of his human nature. For it is written, *A body hast*  
*thou prepared me*. But this did not exclude the divine  
 agency of the second Person; else it never could have been  
 said, that he *took upon him the form of a servant*, Phil.  
 ii. 7. that *he himself took part of flesh and blood*, Heb. ii.  
 14. that *he took on him the seed of Abraham*, ver. 16. But  
 he

\* Vol. i. p. 57.

† Ibid. p. 36.

he seems especially to call God *his Father*, to express his faith in God as *well pleased with him* in his Mediatorial character, *for his righteousness sake*, and *in him* with all his spiritual seed. For when it is foretold that the Messiah shall address God as *his Father*, this character is connected with others expressive of a federal relation: *He shall cry unto me, Thou art my Father, my God, and the rock of my salvation*, Psal. lxxxix. 26.

This paragraph ends with something very like a fallacy; —“ *whom only*, he says, *we ought to serve.*” According to the connexion of the sentence, *the Father* is the subject referred to by the pronoun *whom*. Thence, one who would take the words upon Dr P.’s quotation, would infer that Jesus had said, *Thou shalt worship the Father thy God, and him only shalt thou serve*; as entirely excluding himself. But his language is, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God*, &c. not as particularizing any person, but the one essence, in opposition to that claim of worship impudently made by the Devil, Mat. iv. 9. I ask the Doctor’s pardon, as he does not admit that there is such a being. For he tells us, with almost unparalleled impiety, that “all that may really be meant by Jesus being tempted of the devil, may be, that the improper thoughts mentioned in the course of the narrative, either occurred to himself in his private meditations, or were suggested by some other person\*.” The absurdity of both these suppositions is so obvious, that an illustration of it would be an insult on the reader’s understanding. With respect to the impiety of the first, I shall only observe, that it shews, in a striking light, what low thoughts Socinians have of him whom, out of compliment, they call their *Saviour*. Not only do they deny him to be the infinitely Holy God, but to be perfectly sinless, as *man*. For it is impossible that such thoughts could occur to one’s self, without any external agency, whether they were indulged or not, without an inward principle



ple of sin. It is not at all surprising, that the Doctor should be so anxious to get rid of the miraculous conception; as he does not believe that even what was born of Mary was a *holy thing*.

He has a great deal of *probable* reasoning with respect to Christ, as the object of prayer. But it is of no avail whatsoever against the evidence of *facts*. He, indeed, attempts to prove that the first Christians never prayed to their Lord and Saviour. With this view he quotes 1 Pet. iv. 19. *Let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls unto him in well-doing as unto a faithful Creator* \*. But it has been formerly observed, that even where the name *God* occurs, it is often to be understood as denoting the whole divine essence; and although Jesus be mentioned in connexion, as *Mediator*, yet not as excluding him from that honour which is his prerogative as *God*. Are we to view him, to whom we commit our souls, as a *faithful Creator*? Then, surely, either Socinians call Jesus the author of the new creation in solemn mockery; or he must be worthy of this trust. For he who makes us new creatures, if there be any truth in the language, must be as really our Creator as he who gave us being at first.

Dr P. also quotes 1 Pet. v. 10. *The God of all grace who hath called us unto his eternal glory, by Jesus Christ, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you*. Here, indeed, Christ is mentioned as *the way*. But because nothing more is said in this passage, it will not prove that he has no higher character; it cannot avert the force of other passages, in which the same work is ascribed to him, which Dr P. undoubtedly considers as a proof of Supreme Deity. With this passage let the Doctor, according to his system, reconcile the following words; *Now, our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God even our Fa-*

ther,—comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work, 2 Thes. ii. 16, 17.

Our author says; “Let us now attend to some particulars in the History of the Apostles.” We cordially accede to the proposal, being convinced that the more this history is examined, the more will the falsity of our author’s system appear. “When Herod,” he says, “had put to death James, the brother of John, and imprisoned Peter, we read, Acts xii. 5. that *prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God, not to Christ, for him.*” But the point that the Doctor has yet to prove, is, that this prayer was exclusively made to the Father. We have at least as good reason to believe that this prayer was *heard and answered by* the Son, as that it was *made to* the Father. For Peter says; *Now, I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent his Angel, and hath delivered me, ver. 11.* But our author informs us that “this term, *the Lord*, generally signifies Christ\*.” And the most that can be said of the other, is that it *generally* signifies the Father. But we are to understand neither exclusively. For we have as good evidence that Jesus is the *one Lord*, as our opponents have that the Father is the *one God*.

We are also told that “when Paul and Silas were in prison at Philippi, they *sung praises to God*, not to Christ, “Acts xvi. 25.” But from the context, it would be most natural to think that this term includes Christ as well as the Father. For Paul enjoins the jailor to *believe on the Lord Jesus Christ*, assuring him that thus he *should be saved*, and in a little we find that this is the same with *believing in God*, ver. 31. 34. At any rate, I could not, for my part, venture to *believe*, or *trust* in a person for salvation, from whom I could not ask it in prayer.

It is added; “When Paul was warned of what would befall him if he went to Jerusalem, Acts xxi. 14. he said,  
“*The*

\* Famil. Illustr. p. 36.



“ *The will of the Lord be done.* This, it must be supposed, “ was meant of God the Father, because Christ himself “ used the same language, when praying to the Father, he “ said, *Not my will, but thine be done.*” But the Doctor has taken only a cursory view of this passage. For it was not Paul, but the brethren, who spoke in this manner. However, because one act of worship is substantially the same with another, expressly addressed to a particular person, it will not follow, if there be no other evidence, that the same *person* is addressed in both instances. Nor can it be justly concluded that the words, here quoted, could not respect Christ, because he used the same language in addressing the Father. For Dr P. himself cannot deny that the dying martyr Stephen addressed the same prayer to Jesus, as Jesus at his own death, addressed to the Father. It is granted that this language, with respect to Christ, *The will of the Lord be done*, was used very differently from that, *Not my will, &c.* For in the former instance his *divine* will is meant, as being essentially the same with that of the Father. But in the latter, he spoke merely of his *human* will. According to the Doctor’s own acknowledgment, there must be *more* probability that the term *Lord* here respects Christ, than that it respects the Father. For he grants as we have seen, that it *generally* bears the former sense. But the truth is; Dr P. is willing that the term *Lord* should denote Christ, when it does not necessarily refer to any of that *lordship* which is peculiar to the divine nature; that is, when it can be applied to him without its proper meaning.

It is certainly most natural to think that the same person is here meant, as *the Lord*, who, in the verse immediately preceding, is called *the Lord* Jesus. An impartial reader would undoubtedly conclude that the language of the brethren directly referred to that of Paul. He said, *I am*

*ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the Name of the Lord Jesus. And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done.* Nor would such a reader suppose that the brethren ascribed too much to him, *for whose Name* Paul was willing to suffer so much. It would naturally occur, that *the Lord* for whom he was *ready to die*, had surely something to say as to the disposal of his lot. But let our author inform us, if it be not this *Lord Jesus*, of whom another Apostle, as expressing the faith of all believers in his time, declares; *This is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing ACCORDING TO HIS WILL, he heareth us. And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him,* 1 John v. 14, 15.

Dr P. here transcribes the whole prayer of the apostles, recorded Acts iv. 24. and carefully inserts *or servant*, where according to our version it is *thy Holy Child Jesus*. But what does all this prove, but that which hath never been denied on the other side, that God the Father is properly addressed in prayer? But it cannot prove that he is the only object.

The Doctor then says; “ We have now examined some  
“ particulars both of the *instructions*, and the *examples* of scrip-  
“ ture with regard to the proper object of prayer, in time of  
“ persecution,” &c\*. He here refers to a notion which some have entertained, that “ Christ is the proper object of  
“ prayer in time of persecution.” But surely he who may with propriety be addressed as the object of worship at any time, may be thus addressed at all times.

The Doctor has examined these, but he has carefully passed over a great variety of other *instructions* and *examples*, which clearly prove that Christ is the object of prayer. We have formerly seen that the first Christians

were

\* Vol. i. p. 43.



were generally known by the designation of *those who called on the Name of Jesus*, and proved that this denotes religious worship ; that they prayed to him, when supplying the vacancy in the college of the Apostles, Acts i. 24. that Stephen truly did so, chap. vii. 59, 60. that Paul was engaged in the same exercise, chap. xxii. 17. 1 Tim. i. 12. and that he commended or dedicated the elders of the church of Ephesus to the gracious Word of God, as really as to God the Father, Acts xx. 32.

Many other passages might be mention, which contain the same proof. We have Paul's own account of his exercise, when buffeted by a messenger of Satan. *For this thing*, he says, *I besought the Lord thrice.—And HE said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee ; my strength is made perfect in thy weakness.* With the same breath he adds ; *Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in mine infirmity, that the power of Christ may rest upon me*, 2 Cor. xii. 8, 9. Surely, the same Lord, whom he besought, answered him : and that this was the Lord Christ, is evident from Paul's calling that *the power or strength of Christ*, (for the word is the same) which *the Lord* had called *his power*. Whatever *the Lord* meant by *his strength being made perfect in Paul's weakness*, Paul himself understood as included in *the strength of Christ resting on him*, or *dwelling in him* as in a tabernacle.

Does not the same Apostle view Christ as the object of prayer, equally with the Father, when he says ; *Now may God himself, and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you ?* 1 Thes. iii. 11.

Jesus received this honour from his disciples and others, even during his humiliation. They prayed to him for temporal salvation, which none but God can give, Mat. viii. 25. for mercy, chap. ix. 27. for the increase of their  

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faith,

faith, Luke xvii. 5. for the suppression of their unbelief, Mark ix. 24.

The same glorious Person was addressed by believers, as the object of prayer, before his incarnation. Jacob supplicated the God of his fathers as that Angel who had *redeemed him from all evil*, and who had power to *bleſs*, Gen. xlviii. 15, 16. He was known as *the Name of the God of Jacob*, and under this character addressed as the object of prayer, and as the protector of his people, Psal. xx. 1. Now, we have the impartial testimony of Philo, that the personal *Word* was called *the Name of God*.

#### C H A P. IV.

*Of Dr Priestley's objection to the Doctrine of the Trinity, as implying a Contradiction.*

“**A**SK then,” our author says, “wherein does the A-  
 “**t**hanasian doctrine of the Trinity differ from a con-  
 “tradiction? It asserts in effect that nothing is wanting to  
 “either the Father, the Son, or the Spirit, to constitute  
 “each of them truly and properly *God*, each of them being  
 “equal in eternity, and all divine perfections; and yet  
 “that these three are not *three Gods*, but only *one God*.  
 “They are therefore both *one* and *many* in the same re-  
 “spect, *viz.* in each being *perfect God*.” It is granted,  
 that we are not bound to believe any thing to be a divine  
 doctrine, that is really contradictory to right reason. But  
 from the weakness, and especially from the depravation of  
 our powers, things may seem contradictions, which are by  
 no means so in fact. Even reason may teach us, that it is  
 unquestionably our duty to believe a revealed doctrine, al-  
 though it should infinitely exceed our comprehension.

The



The objection, produced by Dr P., has been often answered before. The terms of the argument, as it is called, are somewhat altered, but the substance is the same. It is an evident sophism. For the Doctor assumes that each person is considered by Trinitarians as “truly and properly God,” so as to engross all divine perfections to himself. In this case, each person would have divine perfections of his own, distinct from those of the other persons. But we believe that each person is “truly and properly God,” as having all divine perfections, though not exclusively. The *equality* asserted, is not that of things perfectly alike, yet substantially distinct; but an equality in the possession of the *same* things, of the *same* “eternity, and all divine perfections.” Therefore, they are not “*one* and *many* in the same respects.” For they are *one*, as to absolute identity of nature and perfections; but *many*, with respect to the individual and common possession of what is essentially one.

The Doctor is chargeable with an obvious fallacy in the structure of his argument. He uses the term *God* in one sense only, as if this were a fair state of the invariable practice of Trinitarians. Whereas, according to scriptural example, they use it, in the connexion to which his argument refers, in two different senses. In the one, it denotes a *person*; in the other, a *nature*. When one person is said to be “truly and properly *God*,” the term is used *personally*; but when the three persons are said to be *one God*, *essentially*. He, indeed, blends two distinct terms, as if they were equally applied to different objects “in the same respect.” These are *God*, and *one God*. But one person is said to be “truly and properly *God*,” not as excluding the other adorable persons, but as distinguishing the essence of the person spoken of from that of all creatures. The three persons are said to be *one God*, not as immediate-

ly opposed to creatures, but as excluding all diversity of essence among these persons.

There is another evident fallacy in this argument. Our author throws in a term, in his conclusion, not to be found in the premises. This is *perfect God*. The introduction of this new term tends greatly to perplex the reader; and seems to give a force to the conclusion, to which it has no claim. Now, this is against all the rules of reasoning: and it is especially unfair, as the expression is not commonly used by Trinitarians. A believer in the Trinity might say, that one person is *perfectly God*; meaning, that he is completely a divine person. But he would not say, that one is *perfect God*, at least in the sense assumed in the argument; because, in the idea of God essentially considered, he includes, not merely all divine perfections, but the different modes of subsistence.

It is evident that, in Dr P.'s argument, the *two first* propositions are meant to express the principles of Trinitarians. But when these propositions are stated according to their real principles, it must appear to every candid reader, that the *conclusion* by no means follows.

“ Nothing is wanting to either the Father, the Son, or  
“ the Spirit, to constitute each of them *a person* truly and  
“ properly *God*.”

But these three persons, being of the same essence, are only *one God*.

“ Therefore, they are both *one* and *many* in the same  
“ respect, *viz.* in each being *perfect God*.”

This argument, then, has one character of a sophism, always given by logicians. The premises do not contain the conclusion.

“ This is certainly,” the Doctor says, “ as much a con-  
“ tradiction as to say that Peter, James, and John, having  
“ each of them every thing that is requisite to constitute a  
“ complete



“ complete man, are yet all together not *three men*, but  
 “ only *one man* \*.” If the term *man* be used, both in the plural and singular, in the same sense, it is undoubtedly a contradiction, to which the other bears no affinity. For we have shewn, that the terms, *God*, and *one God*, are used differently, as they are different in fact. *Three persons* can never be *one person*. But there is a sense in which *three men* may be said to be *one man*; if the first expression be used *personally*, and the second with respect to *nature*. We often use the term *man* to signify the *human nature* in general; as well as to point out an *individual* possessing this nature. This term is, even in Scripture, used to denote both unity and plurality; although not in the same respect. “ God  
 “ created *man* in his own image;—*male and female* created  
 “ he *them*,” Gen. i. 27. chap. v. 1, 2. This is the only sense in which there can be any resemblance between the doctrine of a Three-one God, and the example proposed by Dr P. In this respect, indeed, all the millions of individuals are but *one*, as having the same nature. For not only do they all possess those essential properties which distinguish man from other creatures; but as to body, they are all originally of the same substance. For God “ hath  
 “ made of *one blood* all nations of men,” Acts xvii. 26.

We do not, however, assent to what follows; “ For the  
 “ ideas annexed to the words *God*, or *man*, cannot make  
 “ any difference in the nature of the two propositions.” The divine nature is so infinitely remote from the human, or any created nature, that God himself forbids the comparison. “ *To whom then will ye liken me, and make me equal, and compare me, that we may be like?*” Isa. xlvi. 5. We dare not use such similitudes, in order to explain a mystery. For as Dr Young observes, “ A mystery explained, is a  
 “ mystery destroyed.” We advert to them merely as introduced

\* Ibid.

roduced by our author, to illustrate the falsity of his pretence, that the doctrine of the Trinity implies a contradiction. As the divine nature is so infinitely above the human; although three among men should be, in no sense *one*, it would by no means prove that this cannot be true of God. Therefore, even that sense, in which we have shewn that three persons may be *one*, with respect to man, falls infinitely short of expressing the unity of the divine nature. For although all the individuals of the human race have one nature, and are originally of one substance; yet the union is not so close that the actions of one individual are common to all, which, with respect to external actions, is asserted of the divine nature: Besides, created persons are not only *distinct* from each other, as to personality, so that one is not another; but *separate*, so that one exists without another. But the divine persons, although distinct, are not separate; because one is in another. The Father is in the Son, and the Son in the Father, John xiv. 10\*.

On this important subject, it is still Dr P.'s unhappiness, that he seems to think he has discovered a *likeness* which he can *compare unto* God †. As he *knows the way of the Spirit*, and has advanced so far in discovering *the works of God who maketh all* ‡, he seems emboldened to hope that he may *find out the Almighty himself unto perfection*. But how little regard soever he may pay to the divine defiance, as expressed in a great many passages of Scripture; there is one authority from which he ought not to differ. “The  
“ mind of man will never be able to contemplate the  
“ *being*, perfections, and providence of God, without  
“ meeting with *inexplicable difficulties*. We may find sufficient reason for acquiescing in the darkness which involves

\* Vid. Hen. Alting. Loc. Com. p. 1. loc. 3. p. 46.

† Isa. xl. 18.

‡ Eccles. xi. 5.



“ involves these great subjects, but we must never expect to  
 “ see them set in a perfectly clear light \*.”

The Doctor further observes, in the prosecution of his subject; “ As persons are apt to confound themselves with  
 “ the use of the words *person* and *being*, I shall endeavour  
 “ to give a plain account of them †.” But the very explanation turns out to be “ confusion worse confounded.”—  
 “ The term *being*,” he says, “ may be predicated of every  
 “ thing, and therefore of each of the three persons in the  
 “ Trinity.” The consequence is denied. For the divine essence is but one thing. *These three are one*, 1 John v. 7. *I, saith Christ, and my Father are one*, John x. 30. that is, *one thing*; for the word *εν* is used. Therefore, they are only one *being*. He adds; “ For to say that Christ, for  
 “ instance, is God, but that there is no *being*, no *substance*,  
 “ to which his attributes may be referred, were manifestly  
 “ absurd.” It were so, indeed. But the *being*, to which his attributes are referred, is the divine essence, common to each person. Is it less absurd than what is here supposed, “ to say that Christ is *not* God,” and yet to ascribe divine powers to him; that is, to ascribe *divine attributes* to him; and yet “ to say—that there is no *being*, no *sub-*  
 “ *stance*, to which his attributes may be referred,” but the *human* nature? The Doctor proceeds:—“ and therefore  
 “ when it is said that each of these persons is by himself  
 “ God, the meaning must be, that the Father, separately  
 “ considered, has a *being*, that the Son, separately considered,  
 “ ed, has a *being*, and likewise, that the Holy Spirit, separately  
 “ considered, has a *being*. Here then are no less  
 “ than *three beings*, as well as *three persons*, and what can  
 “ these three beings be but *three Gods*?” All this chain falls to the ground, because the first link is a false one. No

Trinitarian

\* Dr Priestley's Institutes of Religion, Pref. p. xiii,

† Ear. Opin. vol. i. p. 49.

Trinitarian says, that each person is *by himself*, that is, exclusively, *God*. No Trinitarian *considers* one person as *separate* from another. They are distinguished as to the modes of personal subsistence; but they do not exist separately.

He further observes: “ By the words *being, substance, substratum, &c.* we can mean nothing more than the foundation, as it were, of properties, or something to which, in our idea, we refer all the particular attributes of whatever exists. In fact, they are terms that may be predicated of every thing that is the subject of thought or discourse, all the discrimination of things depending upon their peculiar properties. So that whenever the *properties* differ, we say that there is a corresponding difference in the *things, beings, or substances, themselves*. Consequently, if the Father, Son, and Spirit, differ in any respect, so as to have different properties, either in relation to themselves, or to other beings, we must, according to the analogy of all languages, say that they are three different beings, or substances.”

To this it is replied, that the same being may possess very different properties. Motion is totally different from thought. The one belongs to body; the other to mind. Yet man, who possesses both, is generally allowed to be *one being* only. There are *some* who will even assert, that soul and body not only constitute one being, but are essentially the same principle: and such ought certainly to be the last to refuse a difference of properties in the same being. Our author *here* uses the term *being* as equivalent to *thing* or *substance*. Now, although different properties are ascribed to the three adorable persons, it will not follow that they are three different *beings*, that is, three different *substances*. For there can be no difference as to substance, where there are the same *essential* properties. But  
with



with respect to the holy Trinity, no difference, or rather, no distinction is asserted, but as to *personal* properties only. To recur to the Doctor's own comparison, however inadequate; there are certain *essential* properties that distinguish human nature from every other, and that are common to all the individuals possessing it, notwithstanding the various *modification* of this one nature, in an inconceivable variety of *personal* properties. Now, such personal properties *only* are ascribed to Father, Son, and Spirit, as necessarily characterize them in a personal respect.

“ Supposing again,” he says, “ that there is an *identity* “ of attributes in each of them, so that, being considered “ one after the other, no difference should be perceived in “ them, even in idea, (as may be supposed to be the case “ of three men, who should perfectly *resemble* one another “ in all external and internal properties) and supposing, “ moreover, that there should be a perfect coincidence in “ all their thoughts and actions; though there might be a “ perfect *harmony* among them, and this might be called “ *unity*, they would still *be numerically three*.” The author practically shews the danger of assimilating things infinitely different. For even, when he employs comparison, he destroys it. He first supposes an *identity* of attributes. In a moment, this degenerates into a mere *similarity*. The three men who possess “ an *identity* of attributes—perfectly “ *resemble* one another.” The supposition of *identity* necessarily suggested the idea of absolute *unity*. But this also dies away into mere *harmony*, or agreement. But supposing that *identity*, with the idea of which he sets out, the persons would be, indeed, *numerically three*, as persons; but with respect to essence, *numerically one*. For where there is not a mere resemblance, but an absolute sameness of attributes, there is undivided *unity* of nature. This shews the falsity of his inference; “ Consequently, though “ the

“ the Father, Son, and Spirit had no real differences, but,  
 “ as has been said; they had the most perfect identity of  
 “ nature, the most entire unity of will, and consent of in-  
 “ tellect, and an incessant co-operation in the exertion of  
 “ common powers to a common purpose, yet would they,  
 “ according to the analogy of language, not be *one God*,  
 “ but *three Gods*; or which is the same, they would be  
 “ three beings with equal divine natures, just as the three  
 “ men would be three beings, with equal human natures.”

In this reasoning the premises destroy the conclusion. For there cannot be three beings, where there is “ the most perfect identity of nature.” For that alone is called *perfect identity*, which excludes any distinction of being. The Doctor vainly endeavours to support this tottering structure, by supposing an absurdity, *viz.* that the three men would be *three beings*, with *equal human natures*.” These three men might indeed be called *three beings*; each existing *separately* from another. But it will not follow, that three divine persons must be three beings; unless it can be proved, that God has given us *our own* nature as the standard by which we are to judge of his. But although these men might be called three beings, it would not be said that they had *equal human natures*. Notwithstanding all the difference between individuals, we say that they have one common nature: and the less the difference, or in other words, the more “ perfectly they resemble one another in external and internal properties,” the clearer is the evidence of their possessing one nature only.

Our author’s philosophy is not much better than his theology. For he confounds those very terms, which have been invented for the purpose of distinction. “ The term “ *being*,” he says, “ may be predicated of every thing “ without distinction; but the term *person* is limited to in- “ telligent beings. Three men, therefore, are not only  
 “ three



“three beings, but, likewise three persons; the former is the *genus*, and the latter the *species*.” *Being* cannot be the *genus*, unless it can be said with propriety, that *thing*, and *kind of thing*, are terms of the same import. For as “the term *being* may be predicated of every thing,” *genus* or *kind* is that term which denotes one class of *things* which differ from others: *Genus* is the first distinction under *being*. When we speak of *genus*, we undoubtedly mean the particular *kind* of *being*. Thus, under the universal idea conveyed by the term *being*, we say that *animal* is one *genus*. Our author is chargeable with a similar error, in the definition of *person*. This is by no means the *species*. It signifies an *individual* of a certain species: As *animal* is the *genus*, *man* is the *species*, and *person* the *individual*. Therefore, the Doctor reasons erroneously, when he says, that “as *person* is a species, comprehended under the genus “*being*,” the Father, Son, and Spirit “must be three “beings, as well as three persons.” For the assumption being false, the conclusion cannot be true. As *person* is not a *species*, but only an individual, all that can be inferred, is, that these three persons are three individuals.

There are said to be two general tests of the truth or falsehood of any argument. The first is, Whether the premises contain the conclusion? We have already seen that Dr P.’s reasoning does not stand this test. The second is, Whether in the different members of the argument, the terms are taken precisely in the same sense? For wherever this is not the case, the reasoning is sophistical. Let us now apply this second test; and we shall find that Dr P. pays no respect to this kind of unity. He first uses the term *being* as the *genus*. “*Being*,” he says, “is the *genus* :” Then it assumes the state of a *species*, according to his strange definition of the latter term. For “the person,”  
that

that is, the *species*, “is not the less a *being* on this account.” One while he makes *person* a *species*; then, the *genus*; as appears from the same observation: “The *person* is not the less a *being* on this account;” that is, the *species* is not the less a *genus*. The end of all this is, that he may prove the *individual* to be both *genus* and *species*. “As *person* is a *species*, comprehended under the *genus being*, they must be three beings, as well as three persons;” that is, adhering to his own definitions, three *genera*, as well as three *species*. I will prove any thing you please, if you allow me, not only to use terms in whatever sense I choose to impose on them, how opposite soever to that ordinarily adopted; but to change the sense of these terms, as often as I find it necessary.

But we have another specimen of the Doctor’s *reasoning* powers, in the words immediately following what has been already quoted: “The term *God* is a sub-division under the term *person*, because we define *God* to be an intelligent being, possessed of all possible perfections. Consequently, if the Father, Son, and Spirit, be each of them possessed of all possible perfections, which is not denied, they are each of them a *person*, each of them a *being*, and each of them a *God*; and what is this but making three *Gods*?” Our author is so confident of the soundness of this reasoning, that he adds, in the proper style of gascade; “Let any Trinitarian avoid this conclusion from these principles, or assume other principles more just and natural, if he can.” But *Te Deum* has been sometimes sung without a victory. All that is necessary, in reply, is, to try how this definition of the term, *God*, will agree with that nature to which our author wishes to liken the divine. “The term *man* is a sub-division under the term *person*, because we define *man* to be an intelligent being  
“ possessed



“ possessed of *certain* perfections. Consequently, if Peter,  
 “ James, and John, be each of them possessed of all perfec-  
 “ tions” essential to human nature, “ which is not denied,  
 “ they are each of them *a person*,” that is, according to  
 the former definition, *a species*; “ each of them *a being*,”  
 that is, as also formerly defined, *a genus*; “ and each of  
 “ them *a man*,” that is, a *sub-division* under the term *per-*  
 “ *son*; and what is this but making *three genera, three*  
 “ *species, and three sub divisions* ?” Although we learn from  
 the Doctor, that he has taught *Greek*, no man will suspect  
 that he has ever taught *Logic*.

He subjoins; “ This definition of the word *person*, as  
 “ applied to the doctrine of the Trinity, will perhaps be  
 “ objected to; but if any other definition be given, I will  
 “ venture to assert, that it might as well be said that the  
 “ Father, Son, and Spirit are *three Abracadabras*, as  
 “ *three persons*. They will be equally words without  
 “ meaning.” Our author, in his blasphemous boldness,  
 speaks as if *wisdom* were to *die with* him. He denies that  
 words can have any meaning, unless used in his own sense;  
 that is, in a sense directly contrary to that in which they  
 have been used, either by learned or unlearned, for thou-  
 sands of years. Unless you allow *person* to be a *species*, and  
 the *individual* to be a *sub division* under *person*, according  
 to the decision of this infallible Doctor, your language is  
*without meaning*. For my part, I *object* not to his “ defi-  
 “ nition of the word *person* as applied to the doctrine of  
 “ the Trinity,” but even as applied to the doctrine of hu-  
 man nature.

With respect to the explanations which some have at-  
 tempted to give of the mode of the Son’s existence, on  
 which our author animadverts in the remaining part of  
 this section; I do not consider myself as bound to defend  
 them. All such explanations are beyond our sphere; and

they have generally darkened counsel by words without knowledge. To attempt to explain a scriptural doctrine, believed and acknowledged to be a mystery, is nearly as foolish and presumptuous as to object to it, because it is a mystery. To say, that “the divine intellect is so exerted  
“on itself, that the existence of the Son necessarily flows  
“from it;” is speaking of the things of God without any warrant from God himself. If this doctrine of the Trinity be believed, it must receive our faith, not because we comprehend, but because God has revealed it. On this subject, for the purpose of reconciling the minds of others, or of distinguishing truth from error, good men have invented various terms, which, I am convinced, have done great injury to the cause. Even that assertion, that “the Father  
“communicates the divine essence to the Son,” although used by almost every orthodox writer, appears to me unsupported by Scripture, and dangerous in itself. To speak of a communicated essence, and yet of an underived deity, seems to be a real contradiction. I believe that there is a communion in the divine essence among all the adorable persons, that it equally belongs to each. But that one person owes his divine nature to another, is language to which I can affix no scriptural idea. There can be no communication of essence on the one hand, without derivation on the other: and how can there be derivation without inferiority? *The Father hath given to the Son to have life in himself, in the same respect in which he hath given him authority to execute judgment also,—because he is the Son of man, John v. 26, 27.* The Son, essentially, is as properly the origin of all life as the Father. He is *necessarily* so. But the right of holding all divine power in his person as God-man, and of exercising it, in a divine manner, even in the human nature, must be as really matter of *dispensation*, as the assumption of that nature. This *authority* is a  
*voluntary*



*voluntary gift or concession.* It is sometimes, as here, ascribed to the Father, œconomically viewed as sustaining the honour of deity in the work of our redemption : at other times, to God essentially considered, as in Col. i. 19. where no particular person is mentioned ; *It pleased, that in him all fullness should dwell.*

With respect to the generation of the Son, our author inquires, “ If, for any incomprehensible reason, this mysterious *power of generation* be peculiar to the Father, “ why does it not still operate ? Is he not an unchangeable “ being ? the same now that he was from the beginning—? “ Why then are not more sons produced ? ” These words contain their own answer. ‘ The Father *still operates*, not in *producing more sons*, but in the generation of this Son ; because he is *an unchangeable being*. For we are not to conceive of this generation, as if it were an act properly *past*, but as eternally *present* in the divine essence. Therefore it is thus expressed, Psal. ii. 7. *This day have I begotten thee.* It is spoken of as *past*, in condescension to our weak apprehensions, to denote its *perfection*. But as all the *immanent* acts of God, as they have been called, that is, those that are properly *in* God himself, which have no relation to external objects, are eternal ; it is *present*, with respect to endless duration. For in such acts there is no beginning, progress or end. This *generation*, therefore, is eternally present in the one unalterable *day* of God.

## C H A P. V.

*A consideration of the Argument against the Pre-existence of Christ from the Doctrine of Materiality.*

I HAVE formerly examined Dr P.’s objections to the application of those texts which are brought to prove that the world was created by Christ. He next proceeds





that *the spirit of a beast goeth downward*, and that *the beasts perish*; while at the same time it assures me, that, although *the dust of man returns to the earth as it was, the spirit shall return unto God who gave it*; I certainly ought either entirely to lay aside Revelation, or to believe that there is an essential difference between the frame of man and that of a beast; nay, that, according to the distinction made in the language of inspiration, two principles essentially different go to the constitution of his frame. I had better deny Revelation at once, than disbelieve that there is *an innumerable company of angels*, and that *the spirits of just men made perfect* exist in a disembodied state. I cannot conceive, how God should say, *I AM the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob*, if these persons, when this language was used, had no more existence than the dust of the earth; and far less, how Jesus could make this inference, *God is not the God of the dead, but of the living*, Mat. xxii. 32. For according to Dr P.'s principles, the inference, however little to the purpose, ought to have been; "*God is not the God of the living only, but also of the dead.*"

The Doctor, however, seems fully satisfied that his reasoning "*is conclusive against the doctrine of a soul, and consequently against the whole system of pre-existence.*" "If Peter, James, and John," he says, "*had no pre-existent state, it must be contrary to all analogy to suppose Jesus to have pre-existed \*.*" But there is one species of *analogy*, to which Dr P. finds it not a little difficult to prove that this is *contrary*. I mean *the analogy of faith*. It is to be feared, that this doctrine goes farther than he may be willing to confess, even to the denial of *the Father of Spirits*. For if it be inconceivable that a spirit should exist distinctly from matter, he must either deny the being of God, or assert that God is a material being.

\* Ibid. p. 85, 86.

The latter, indeed, is the natural consequence of the Socinian doctrine. For they ascribe those properties to God which belong to matter. They deny that he is a simple or uncompounded Being. They deny that he is infinite, ascribing extension to the divine nature. Some of this persuasion have gone the length of attributing a bodily shape to God; as the learned Owen hath proved in his examination of Biddle's Catechism\*. This seems to have been still a feature of the Unitarian heresy. For the author of the *Clementine Homilies*, who is claimed by Dr P. as an Unitarian, makes Peter express his own sentiments concerning God in this manner: "He who truly exists, is he whose  
 " *form* is borne by the *body* of man; on which account the  
 " heavens, and all the stars, though more excellent in their  
 " nature, have continued in a state of subserviency to him,  
 " who is inferior according to essence, because of the *form*  
 " of him who is superior," viz. God †.

On the other hand, Socinians have ascribed the essential properties of God to matter. It seems to be too well-founded a charge, that they hold it to be eternal, in the same sense in which they ascribe eternity to God. They go not so far as the followers of Aristotle, who asserted that the world existed from eternity in a regular state. But for once they are *Platonizing Christians*. Here they have framed a very curious system. Volkelius affirms that  
 " God is said to have created the world of nothing, because  
 " he formed it out of Chaos." This is a Socinian Mystery. He made the world *of nothing*, because he made it *of something*. He also says that "these words, *The earth was*  
 " *without form and void*, describe the state of things before  
 " the

\* Page 61—72.

† Ο γὰρ οὕτως ὡν ὕτος ἐστίν, ὃ τὴν μορφήν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου βασάζει σῶμα, ὃ εἶνεκεν οὗ ἕρπυος καὶ πάντες οἱ ἀστέρες ὑπεμείναν δυνάμειν κατ' ὕσιν κρείττονες ὄντες, τῷ κατ' ὕσιν χειρόνι, διὰ τὴν τῆς κρείττονος μορφήν. Hom. 3. sect. 7. p. 636.



“ the creation \*” Dr P. insinuates something of the same nature, when he says, that “ what is called the *Mosaic* “ creation was probably—the *re-making*, or *re-constituting* “ of the world, out of a former chaos †.

## C H A P. VI.

*Of the objection to the Doctrine, that it would be of no Use, although it were true.*

**D**R. PRIESTLEY concludes this part of his work with an inquiry into the use of the doctrine of the Trinity. According to him, “ all that can be said for it, is that the doctrine, however improbable in itself, is necessary to explain “ some particular texts of scripture ; and that if it had not “ been for those particular texts, we should have found no “ want of it. For there is neither any fact in nature, nor any “ one purpose of morals (which are the object and end of all “ religion) that requires it †.” He discovers no occasion for a three-one God ; and there are many who would be pleased that there were *no God*. But the wishes or opinions of either are of no weight in the scale of truth. If this doctrine be really “ necessary to explain some particular texts,” and Socinians have never been able to prove the contrary, it ought to be believed, although we should not otherwise discern the use of it. There are many of the works of God, the utility of which we cannot perceive. Shall we, therefore, dare to say that he hath made them in vain ? This kind of reasoning has too much the appearance of calling God to *give an account of his matters*. Would it be great presumption in the clay to say to the potter, *Why hast thou made me thus ?* And is it not unspeakably greater presumption to say, *Why art thou thus ?* Why dost thou

M m 4

exist

\* Lib. ii. c. 4. ap. Hoornbeck Socin. Confutat. l. iii. c. 1.

† Famil. Illustr. p. 44.

‡ Vol. i. p. 87.

exist in this manner, rather than in that? If reason be sufficiently qualified to be the test of all that we ought to believe, what is the *use* of revelation itself?

I cannot presume to go so far as some who have pretended to *prove* that there could have been no more, and no fewer divine Persons than three. This, it would seem, is being wise above what is written. We know that there are no more, and no fewer. Therefore, we may safely conclude that, according to the incomprehensible nature of God, matters could not have been otherwise. Nor can I pretend fully to illustrate the use of this great mystery; and far less, to answer all the cavils, or to satisfy the minds of those who are *become vain in their imaginations*. But as it would seem that one great design of the work of redemption was clearly to reveal the mystery of the Trinity, by a discovery of the peculiar operations of the adorable Persons; he, who “*as a new born babe, desires the unadulterated milk of the word*,” will find the doctrine to be of such use, that he *may grow thereby*, as to both faith and practice.

Our author speaks of *morals*, as if they were the only *object* of religion. They are, indeed, the *end* of it. But faith is the *beginning*. For *he that cometh unto God must believe that he is*, Heb. xi. 6. Now, we cannot truly believe the *being* of God, without believing that *he is*, or *exists*, according to that revelation which he is pleased to give of himself in the word. If, therefore, he reveals himself as a three-one God, and we acknowledge one person only, we believe not in God, but in an idol of our own imagination. *Without this faith it is impossible to please him*. For all outward worship is only the clothing of that which is concealed from the sensible eye. There is an inward worship of a twofold nature, which, according to the frame of our souls, we owe to God. We owe him the homage  
of



of the understanding, and of the will. Unless, by faith, we subject our understandings to his authority in the revelation which he gives of himself, we can never truly honour him with the worship of our wills. For the will, when properly regulated, immediately and strictly follows the direction of the understanding. We can neither embrace nor adhere to the true God, unless we know him in this character. If we have not just apprehensions of him, we radically err as to *morals*. For it is only by faith that we can either know or do what is well-pleasing in his sight. We must be *transformed, by the renewing of our minds, THAT we may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God*, Rom. xii. 2. But the great mean of this transformation is faith, especially as *beholding a Divine Saviour in the glass of the word*, and depending on the gracious operation of *the Lord the Spirit*, 2 Cor. iii. 18.

It may be said, that the principles of morality are so plain, that there can be no dispute, or even doubt about them. But if we entertain wrong apprehensions concerning the divine perfections, we can have none that are right with respect to moral duty. The nature of moral evil can never be known to those who think that God is *altogether such a one as themselves*, and that he will not require satisfaction for their sin. Socinians afford a striking proof of this. They refuse to believe the testimony of God concerning his perfections, and the operations flowing from these. They materially eject faith from their system of religion. Hence they err as to the end of all *morals*. Now the *end* regulates the nature of every action. They hope to appease God, and make an atonement for sin, by their own obedience. This destroys the action. For the Spirit of God assures us, that *as many as are of the works of the law*, that is, as seek justification by their own works, *are under the curse*, Gal. iii. 10. Our repentance and reformation

mation can be no atonement for past transgression; because we owe the duty of every moment for itself. This line of obedience is hopeless. For *the Ethiopian may change his skin, and the leopard his spots, as soon as we who have been accustomed to do evil, can learn to do well.* In consequence of refusing to believe in a Trinity, our author, that he may be consistent with himself, finds it necessary to deny the mission of a divine Person, and the whole of that vicarious work of obedience and suffering, by which he *is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth,* and by which also he *sanctifies the people,* enabling them to *walk in newness of life.* Or shall we rather suppose that he can see no occasion for a second Person to redeem, because he “finds no want of” a real redemption? This we know, *They that be whole need not a Physician.*

We have the Doctor’s own testimony: “Whatever may be meant by the *redemption of the world,* is not the being who made it equal to that also?” And we never thought of ascribing it to any other *being.* “If his creatures offend him,” he further says, “and by repentance and reformation become the proper objects of his forgiveness, is it not more natural to suppose that he has, *within himself,* a power of forgiving them, and of restoring them to his favour, without the strange expedient of another person, fully equal to himself, condescending to animate a human body, and dying for them \*.” It is enough for us to know that God hath expressly declared, he *will by no means clear the guilty, or hold sin innocent,* Exod. xxxiv. 7. This being the case, it is vain to talk about what power he hath *in himself.* We know that he hath no power to *deny himself:* for this would imply imperfection. No creature can make atonement for his own sin. For there would be much sin even in his attempts to satisfy. And *he that offendeth in one point, is guilty of all.* As the curse of the law

\* Vol. i. p. 88.



law must be sustained, this could be done by none but a divine Person. For *if thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?*

The Doctor adds indeed; “We never think of any .  
“similar expedient in order to forgive, with the greatest  
“propriety and effect, offences committed by our children  
“against ourselves.” But supposing this to be true, is there any parallel? Are not all these, even the greatest, but a few pence, compared with many talents? We are far from wishing strictly to compare the operations of God with those of man. But he hath condescended to represent his works in language borrowed from creatures, that they might thus be able to form some apprehensions of them, still remembering that there is an infinite disparity. In the present instance there is some resemblance. A person, equal in rank, has often found it necessary to intercede with an earthly parent for pardon to an undutiful child. How often has this office been performed by one of the parents towards the other? Even when a parent resolves to forgive, in order to the preservation of his dignity and authority, does he not sometimes secretly employ another person to intercede for the transgressor? Nay, is it not common among men, that, for the reconciliation of a creditor to a debtor, a third person interposes, and pays the debt, as the only mean of obtaining deliverance for the latter from the rigour of law? If this be done *voluntarily*, would any one charge the creditor with injustice? Our author, with considerable art, confines the comparison to the conduct of a *parent*. One in this relation, indeed, is generally apt to err on the side of indulgence. But when a very heinous offence is committed by a child against a parent, the filial tie, instead of being an excuse, is justly considered as a great aggravation.

Perhaps it may be said, that “even supposing the necessity of infinite satisfaction, there is no use for the doctrine

of a plurality of persons; because, it being granted that the Son, in making atonement, satisfied his own justice as God, as well as that of the Father, all this might have been as well done by one person. It is indeed true, that the Son satisfied his own justice, but not immediately. The atonement was properly directed to God essentially considered in the person of the Father, œconomically acting as *the Judge of all*: whereas the second Person is to be viewed immediately in this transaction, as *emptying himself*, and sustaining *the form of a servant*. This idea is far more consistent with the dignity, order and beauty of the divine operations, than if it were supposed that one person acted as judge and surety, as both inflicting and bearing the punishment. The Doctor will not refuse, that, according to all just ideas of human government, the state is the sovereign and judge, and that the transgressor is amenable to the whole. Yet for the purposes of order and dignity, society voluntarily vests its powers in one or more individuals. Thus although the transgressor, in atoning for his crime, may be said to make satisfaction to himself, in as far as he is a member of the state; this satisfaction is more immediately directed to others, who are the representatives of the whole.

It is also more consonant to our ideas of divine propriety, that, on the supposition of a gracious purpose to redeem lost man by an infinite price, the glory of the Godhead should be obscured, as to its display, in one person only, than that it should be thus obscured in the whole extent of its subsistence.

Those who assert that there is but one person in God, of consequence deny the *mission* of a divine Person. It is said, that one divine person can accomplish all that is supposed to be included in this work? But even among men, when a sovereign treats with rebels, he justly reckons it more consistent



flent with his dignity to employ an ambassador ; while, at the same time, he generally demonstrates the seriousness of his intentions, and the regard he has for his ungrateful subjects, by employing one of distinguished rank. And surely the dignity of *God the Judge of all* is more conspicuous in his employing a messenger, while his love is eminently displayed in the essential greatness of the Person sent. The Lord of the vineyard said, *They will reverence my Son. God hath spoken unto us—by the Son.* As it is most consistent with the glory of God, that he should employ a Messenger, we cannot form an idea of any plan that has such a tendency to affect the minds of men with a sense of the importance of the gospel-message, as its being delivered by him who is *the fellow* of the Lord of hosts.

While it was the will of God to illustrate the greatness of our salvation by the very manner of its revelation, the infinite distance of man required that it should be revealed in such a way as not to overwhelm him with terror. The history of the awful transaction at Mount Sinai affords a decisive proof, that God, as preserving his own majesty, could not deal with man without a Mediator. Moses was indeed admitted to this high office. But it must be evident to any impartial mind, that it could be only in a typical respect. For his distance from God was as great as that of those very persons for whom he acted. Besides, God suffered him to discover his unfitness for the proper discharge of this office in different ways. For Moses himself was afraid at the awful display of divine glory. *He said, I exceedingly fear and quake*, Heb. xii. 21. He also *spake unadvisedly with his lips*, and in his anger smote the rock, instead of merely speaking to it, as God had commanded, Num xx. 10, 11. It being, therefore, the pleasure of God to reveal himself *mediately*, and at the same time with becoming majesty ; and no creature being fit to stand between him

and

and sinners, it was only by one partaking of the divine nature that he could make himself known. It was only by this person sustaining the character of a Mediator, that sinners could have hope. Whatever Dr P. may *find*, even the *perfect* and *upright* Job *found the want of* such a glorious person. Therefore, under a sense of sin, of the inefficacy of all his own duties to make atonement, and of the impossibility of standing before his judge, he cries out: *I am afraid of all my sorrows, I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent.—If I wash myself with snow-water, and make my hands never so clean; yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me. For he is not a man as I am, that I should answer him, and we should come together in judgment. Neither is there any daysman \* betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both,* Job ix. 28.—33.

Those who acknowledge one person only, reject that wonderful *ladder, set on the earth, the top of which reaches to heaven*, Gen. xxviii. 12. We can form no just idea of *a way into the holiest of all*, but through one who essentially is *the Most Holy*. It is necessary that this should be a distinct Person from him to whom he is our *way*. Accordingly, God the Son reveals himself in this character: *I am the Way,—no man cometh unto the Father but by me.* That our necessities might also be completely supplied, while the majesty of the Judge is still preserved, we have another divine Person as our guide. Therefore, saith our Lord; *When he the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth*, John xvi. 13.

Had God revealed himself in such majesty as at Mount Sinai, the revelation would have been lost to sinful men. Had he only manifested himself, as Jesus did on the mount of

\* The same word, *μεσιτης*, is here used by the Seventy, which, in the New Testament, denotes the one Mediator.



of transfiguration; the senses of the hearers would have been overpowered. Had God, considered according to the Socinian scheme as one person only, revealed himself so as to veil his glory, unbelieving creatures, having no attestation but his own, would have objected to it, as the Jews did when our Lord bore witness of himself. But we are supplied with a striking proof that we *do not follow cunningly devised fables*, because the divine person who appeared in an humble state on earth, was solemnly attested by the voice of another divine person *from the excellent glory*, which testimony was heard and declared by unexceptionable witnesses.

The Doctor can see nothing that is ascribed to the third Person, for which the first was not sufficient. But it is more congruous to the dignity of God, that one in the character of a Messenger should *strive* with guilty and rebellious man, than that this should be done by him who sustains the character of Judge. It was at the same time necessary that he, to whom this work was assigned, should be able to convince, to illuminate, and to renew the sinner.

According to the orthodox system, the perfection of the work of redemption, as to purchase, has the greatest attestation possible; not merely from the infinite veracity of the testimony, but because it is confirmed by various witnesses, who perfectly agree in their evidence. Is it said, that the word of one divine person is as good as that of three? It is, indeed, in itself. In the same manner may it be said, that the word of God is as good as his oath. But in condescension to human weakness, and to silence our unbelief, God hath graciously *confirmed his promise by an oath, that we might have a strong consolation*, Heb. vi. 17, 18. From the same gracious motive, he hath given us a threefold testimony. The great *matter* of our redemption

is *established in the mouth*, not of two only, but of *three witnesses*. To the manner of confirming a fact among men the Spirit of inspiration seems to allude, when it is said, *There are three that bear record in heaven.—If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater, 1 John v. 7. 9.*

Besides, there could be no vindication of the essential dignity of the Son, as unimpaired by his mission and voluntary humiliation, equal to that of his having authority to send another divine person, who had never humbled himself in this manner. The Son, continuing to act in an assumed character of inferiority, could not send the Father, he being still federally considered as judge. But those who believe in the Holy Trinity can admire the wisdom of the divine plan, in his sending the third Person. Indeed, the *great salvation*, viewed in its necessary connexion with the doctrine of the Trinity, appears in a far more clear and glorious manner, than it could otherwise have done. Its various parts are far more distinctly discerned, than if we should suppose them all to have been accomplished by one person. The ascription of the *plan* and *purpose* to the Father arrests the mind in the contemplation of that infinite wisdom displayed in this work; of the great obstacles which were in the way, especially the holiness and justice of God, as well as his faithfulness in the threatening; and of his adorable sovereignty, in laying hold of our nature, while that of Angels was passed by. While the *purchase* is ascribed to the second Person, we are called to consider the infinite distance that was between him and the accomplishment of his work, the unspeakable condescension that was necessary, the greatness of the evil of sin, for which nothing could atone but the suffering of an infinite person, and the tremendous nature of divine wrath. The ascription of the *application* of redemption to the Holy Spirit, wonderfully



fully tends to affect the mind with a sense of that *death in trespasses, and in sins*, to which we are subjected ; as it is not enough that a divine Person should purchase redemption, but a person of equal dignity must also apply it to our souls, in the illumination of the darkened understanding, the conviction of the obdurate conscience, the inclination of the rebellious will, and the sanctification of the carnal affections.

The plan of redemption, as the work of a Trinity of co-equal Persons, gives us the most astonishing views of divine love. It points out the Father as eternally and infinitely delighting in the second Person, not only as the Son, but as the Surety of lost man ; as eternally and infinitely expressing his love to us in the expressions of his love to our glorious Mediator. This is the account given by personal Wisdom : *The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting ; from the beginning, or ever the earth was.—When he prepared the heavens,—then I was by him, as one brought up with him : and I was daily his delight*, Prov. viii. 22. &c. Both Father and Son are viewed as, in a federal respect, holding an eternal and ineffable communion of love with the Holy Spirit, who cheerfully engaged, for the completion of the divine purpose, to be sent by both, to condescend to strive with man, to dwell in him as the Spirit of holiness, and to restore that image which should be defaced by sin.

Hence also we perceive the security of our salvation ; because the New Covenant is made ; not like that of Works, between God and a mutable creature, but between divine Persons equally unchangeable. We may therefore be assured that nothing *shall be able to separate us from the*

*love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, and that his Spirit shall not depart from us. Those who deny a Trinity, are so far consistent as to refuse that the salvation, which they expect, is an everlasting salvation. As they deny that the Messiah is JEHOVAH, they disavow any confidence in that everlasting righteousness which he hath brought in. As they disbelieve that the counsel of peace was between JEHOVAH and the Man whose name is the Branch, they trust in a covenant, which, according to their own confession, may be, and often is, broken.*

I may add, that this doctrine discovers the *unity* of the divine essence in a far more striking light than that of one person only. Mere numerical unity does not give us the highest idea of perfection. For this unity may exist, where there is the greatest disorder in the subject. But when many perfections, as we speak of them, although apparently opposed in their claims and operations, *meet together and embrace each other*, in one essence; we have a far more exalted idea of unity. If all these perfections exist in distinct persons, in a state of infinite harmony, notwithstanding distinct personal operations; we have the most perfect idea of unity that the mind can conceive. Its perfection is tried by the peculiar operations of these persons, and displayed by the absolute harmony which is the result of the whole.

But although we could discern no other *use* of the doctrine of the Trinity, but that of exercising *faith*, it would be sufficient. This is a power communicated to man, for the express purpose of assuring him of the truth of things that are beyond his reach, which he has not seen, or cannot see. For *faith is the demonstration of things not seen*, Heb. xi. 1. We are sometimes, in an improper sense, said to believe what we have seen. We also speak of *believing*  
certain



certain truths, which are conclusions from facts submitted to our senses, or in consequence of a process of reasoning. But this is not properly called *faith*, but *knowledge*. *Faith* is properly a relative term; and its correlate is *Testimony*. Do we not conclude that many things exist in nature, because we have undeniable evidence; although we cannot understand *how* they exist? And do we not owe as much honour to a divine testimony, as to the testimony of our senses, or the result of our fallible reasonings? When Abraham *believed* a promise *against hope*, did he not act as *irrationally*, as he who believes a doctrine above reason? Was not *every thought brought into captivity*, in the one case, as much as is supposed in the other? However much the conduct of Abraham is extolled in Scripture, he certainly paid as little regard to *reason*, in believing that God had commanded him to sacrifice his son Isaac, as he can do, who believes that God *spared not his own Son*.

Such a faith has the most certain and extensive influence as to *morality*. The latter, certainly, in a special manner, includes *self-denial*; although this, as far as it implies that we are *not to lean to our own understanding*, cannot be reckoned one of the cardinal virtues of Socinians. When Agur considered that he could *not* tell the name of God, or *his Son's name*, he was convinced that he *had neither learned wisdom, nor had the knowledge of the holy*, Prov. xxx. 3, 4. When God revealed himself to Job, as incomprehensible in his nature and operations, he confessed that he had *uttered things that he understood not, things too wonderful for him, which he knew not*; wherefore he *abhorred himself, and repented in dust and ashes*, Job xlii. 3—6. When Isaiah saw the glory of Christ, as a prelude of his incarnation, he cried out; *Wo is me,—for I am a man of unclean lips!* Isa. vi. 1—5. John xii. 41.

Such a faith naturally fills the mind with greater *reverence* of the incomprehensible majesty of God. Even Seraphs cover their faces with their wings, when they proclaim the thrice holy Lord God Almighty, Isa. vi. 2, 3. *Wonder* is another exercise of the mind, which properly respects what we do not fully comprehend. According to the frame of our souls, it tends greatly to inspire, and to preserve veneration. We generally find that what is thoroughly known, although other circumstances be equal, commands less respect than what is greatly unknown. Admiration, as it regards God, is an act of worship, succeeding faith in an incomprehensible object. But there is no room for this, in the Socinian system. It leaves nothing in the Saviour, that can entitle him to the name of *Wonderful*. But notwithstanding, he *shall be admired in all them that believe*.

It must be allowed that one great mean of attaining perfection is the contemplation of the perfections of God. And surely, that doctrine has the greatest influence on *morals*, which exhibits these in the most striking light. That the doctrine of a Three-one God, acting as our Redeemer, has this effect, we have already seen.

No consideration can so powerfully recommend *unity, love, humility, and disinterested benevolence*, as the example of a divine Person humbling himself for our sakes. Therefore saith the Apostle Paul; *Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made him-*  
*self*



*self of no reputation, &c.* Phil. ii. 2—7. Can any argument more powerfully recommend *forbearance* towards weak brethren. *Even Christ pleased not himself*, Rom. xv. 3. Throw aside the idea of his divinity, and you lose the whole force of the argument; nay, you make it the language of folly. “Jesus had more trust than any other servant ever had; therefore, more obligation to fidelity: and yet he was not unfaithful to his master.” What follows from this? That the more obligation a man is under to another, it is the more surprising that he should prefer the pleasure of his benefactor to his own. “If even Jesus, a mere creature, pleased not himself, but one who was infinitely *superior* to him; *much more* ought ye to please your *equals* rather than yourselves.”

Is *love* the *fulfilling of the law*? Surely, no representation can be given of the love of God, that can have so constraining an influence on our hearts, as that of his giving his own Son. Suppose Jesus to be the most holy man that ever lived, given to mankind—sinners merely to set them an example; what a poor idea does this give us of divine goodness, compared with that of giving a Son, equal with himself, to die for our sins? *Herein is love,—that—he sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins*, 1 John iv. 10. Can any argument so powerfully incite to brotherly love, as that of a divine Person cheerfully giving himself for us, as *an offering and a sacrifice*? *Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren*, chap. iii. 16. The doctrine of a Trinity in unity, is a most cogent motive to unity among brethren, and shews in what the true perfection of a church consists. How ought it to influence Christians to endeavour to have but *one heart*, and *one soul*, when they know that the adorable Persons, notwithstanding

ing a peculiarity of operation, have eternally manifested but one will in the work of salvation. That this ought to have the force of an example with us, is evident from the intercessory prayer of our Saviour being recorded for the use of the church:—*That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us,—that they may be one, even as we are one. I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one,* John xvii. 21. 23.

Obedience to the holy law could never be recommended by that of a mere man, as much subjected to its authority as others. But what a striking view have we of the dignity of this law, when we consider that Jesus, *although he were a Son*, so as to be above the law, yet learned obedience.

Nothing can have such a tendency to illustrate the guilt and misery of fallen man, to awaken attention to the great concerns of salvation, and to recommend that holiness, *without which no man shall see the Lord*, as a full persuasion, not only that the price of our redemption is paid by a divine Person, but that it is the special work of another Person, equally divine, to convince us of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.

Although Dr P. cannot see that the Doctrine of the Trinity is of any use, or that there is “any one purpose in” *morals* that requires it,” an inspired Apostle considered the steadfast acknowledgment of this mystery, not merely as a source of comfort and union, but as the very end of all that comfort and union which the church could attain, of all that love which is the sum and perfection of morality.—*I would that ye knew*, he says, *what great conflict I have for you, and for them at Laodicca, and for as many as have not seen*



*seen my face in the flesh : that their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, TO THE ACKNOWLEDGMENT of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ ; in whom, or in which mystery, are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, Col. ii. 1, 2, 3.*

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.